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WITHDRAWN

VOLUME XI. MDCCCCV.

The Bibelot

A Reprint of Poetry and Prose for Book Lovers, chosen in part from scarce editions and sources not generally known . . . .

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VOLUME XI

Portland, Maine
THOMAS B. MOSHER
Mdccccv

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1905

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The Bibelot

"THE play was late in breaking up:" —who that has read and delighted in Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship *can quite forget the magic effect of these simple opening words of Goethe's wondrous Iliad of Youth and Passion? Whatever befalls Wilhelm we are assured that here are laid bare the secret springs of Life and Action which beginning at the very heart of romance, broaden like a great tidal river untroubled by shoals or shifting sands until its Hero stands justified of Experience and attains to years of philosophic calm. And one recalls as well the great English contemporary of Goethe who, amidst all his insincerities which an active life of pleasure entailed, yet had the genius at his command to limn for time and eternity the episode of Haidee — that white undying flower of Love — flung down in the midst of the tumult and rabble rout of* his *Comédie humaine.*

There are, confessedly, rare and strange diversities in the exploitation of Youthful Love! Thirty years ago the original

Sonnets and Songs by Proteus[1] *told the few who cared to listen of the advent of a new singer, who has since augmented his first fruits, until in these fifty and three Shakespearean sonnets we possess what may be taken as the sequel and summary of all*

---

[1] *The poetical productions of Mr. Blunt are:*

1. Sonnets and Songs. By Proteus. London, 1875.

2. The Love Sonnets of Proteus, London, 1881. Issued anonymously, but in the Fourth edition with author's name on title-page. (106 sonnets only.)

3. The Wind and the Whirlwind, London, 1884.

4. In Vinculis, London, (with etched portrait,) 1889.

5. A New Pilgrimage, and other Poems, London, 1889.

6. Esther, Love Lyrics, and Natalie's Resurrection, London, 1892.

7. The Love Lyrics and Songs of Proteus with the Love Sonnets of Proteus now reprinted in their full text with many sonnets omitted from the earlier editions, London, MDCCCXCII. (This was the third book issued from The Kelmscott Press, and was limited to 300 copies at £2.0.0. net.)

8. Esther: A Young Man's Tragedy: together with the Love Sonnets of Proteus. Quarto. Boston, Copeland and Day, MDCCCXCV. (The blank verse sonnet dedication of Esther *is not given in the English edition of 1892, but must be sought for in the above reprint.)*

9. Satan Abolished: A Victorian Mystery. 4to, London, 1899.

10. The Love Sonnets of Proteus. Old World Series. Portland, Maine, MDCCCCIV. (This

that preceded them. Unlike its magnificent forerunner Mr. George Meredith's Modern Love, *the sonnet-sequence here reprinted deals not in "tragic hints" and falls far short of the disastrous finale of the earlier poem which leaves two noble lives involved in utter shipwreck.*

"Esther *is named 'a young man's tragedy', and 'a true story of the earth', it tells a tale, ever old and new, of the fall of man. . . . It ended as such things must end, and the youth, grown man, and looking back on this youthful episode, can but regret that he wronged by anger a woman who was indeed a Manon Lescaut* — faite pour les pardons et non pour les serments, *as M. Armand Silvestre has defined, once for all, the exquisite faithless creature. 'Dear, passionate Esther, soulless but how kind!' is his epitaph on the grave of love."*

None the less an incomparable tenderness exhales from out the theme as developed in

---

edition follows the complete Kelmscott text giving in all 142 sonnets.)

Besides the above there have been issued two volumes of Selections: 1. The Poetry of W. S. Blunt selected and arranged by W. E. Henley and George Wyndham, Cr. 8vo, London, 1898. 2. The Love Poems of W. S. Blunt, edited by F. Chapman in The Lovers' Library, 32 mo, London, 1902.

these sonnets. If Wilfrid Blunt has written nothing since that can compare with them, they would still plead effectually against the oblivion of swift Time. For it is a presentment of Passion which grasps the secret of the everlasting charm of work as far apart as Manon Lescaut *and* La Vie de Bohème, *and Daudet's* Sappho, *even,—masterpieces each and every of 'Mutable loves and loves perverse', if you choose to call them so, and ending as they all end in a half sob, a poignant cry of pain because there arises out of the emptied chalice of Desire a vision of the unlovely and lonely later years.*

"Musette, who has at last confessed
The carnival of life was gone,
Came back, one morning, to the nest
Whence, like a wild bird, she had flown:
But, while I kissed the fugitive,
My heart no more emotion knew,
For, she had ceased, for me, to live,
And "You," she said, "no more are you."

FOR FEBRUARY:
ESTHER: XXVII-LIII.

FOR MARCH:
FOR THOSE WHO LOVE MUSIC:
RAFFAELLA.
BY AXEL MUNTHE.

ESTHER: A YOUNG MAN'S TRAGEDY

By

WILFRID SCAWEN BLUNT.

DEDICATION:
TO THE BEST-BELOVED.

Night on our lives, ah me, how surely has it fallen!
Be they who can deceived, I dare not look before.
See, sad years to your own. Your little wealth long hoarded,
How sore it was to win! how soon it perished all!
Beauty, the one face loved, the pure eyes mine so worshipped,
So true, so touching once, so tender in their dreams!
Find me that hour again, I yield the rest uncounted,
Urns for the dust of time, divine in her sole tears,
Unseen one! Unforgotten! oh, if your eyes behold it,
By chance, this page revealed, which trembling holds your name
Marged in the ultimate wreck of fame and meaner joys,
Co-partner be with me in this my soul's last sorrow,—
Pearl of my hidden life,—this grief that not again
Unspoiled love's rose shall blow, the dear love which was ours.

TO THE HAND THAT HAS FORGOTTEN,
THE EARS THAT CANNOT HEAR, AND
THE LIPS THAT SHALL SPEAK OF LOVE
NO MORE FOR EVER.

ESTHER:

A YOUNG MAN'S TRAGEDY.

I.

WHEN is life other than a tragedy,
Whether it is played in tears from the first scene,
In sable robes and grief's mute pageantry,
For loves that died ere they had ever been,
Or whether on the edge of joys set keen,
While all the stage with laughter is agog,
Death stepping forward with an altered mien
Pulls off his mask, and speaks the epilogue?
Life is a play acted by dying men,
Where, if its heroes seem to foot it well
And go light-tongued without grimace of pain,
Death will be found anon. And who shall tell
Which part was saddest, or in youth or age,
When the tired actor stops and leaves the stage?

II.

Yes, who shall tell the value of our tears,
Whether we wept aright or idly grieved?
There is a tragedy in unloved years,
And in those passionate hours by love deceived,
In lips unkissed and hopes too soon bereaved,
And youth's high courage which no strength could save,
And manhood's web of fate by folly weaved,
And grey-haired grief brought down into the grave.
Who shall distinguish truly and be wise
'Twixt grief and grief, 'twixt night and night? The sun
Has its own sorrow and a voice that cries
Louder than darkness of its joys undone,
And pleads with that exceeding bitter cry,
"I have tasted honey, and behold, I die!"

III.

A little honey! Ay, a little sweet,
  A little pleasure when the years were young,
A joyous measure trod by dancing feet,
  A tale of folly told by a loved tongue,—
These are the things by which our hearts are wrung
  More than by tears. Oh, I would rather laugh,
So I had not to choose such tales among
  Which was most laughable. Man's nobler half
Resents mere sorrow. I would rather sit
  With just the common crowd that watch the play
And mock at harlequin and the clown's wit,
  And call it tragedy and go my way.
I should not err, because the tragic part
Lay not in these, but sealed in my own heart.

IV.

And thus it is. The tale I have to tell
  Is such another. He who reads shall find
That which he brings to it of heaven or hell
  For his best recompense where much is blind,
A jest-book or a sermon or mere wind,—
  Each as he may,—for life's least godly mirth
Is mingled strangely here with fate unkind,
  And this is a true story of the Earth.
The passionate heart of youth with its desires
  Is not all noble, and some baseness clings
For ever mixed with its eternal fires,
  Else were it single among human things.
And all life's wisdom learns but this last plan,
To jest at tears and weep man's mirth and man.

V.

I had been an hour at Lyons. My breath comes
Fast when I think of it. An hour, no more,
I trod those streets and listened to the drums,
The mirth, the music, and the city's roar,
And found no sermon for me in her stones.
It was the evening of St. Martin's fair,
And all the world, its working bees and drones,
Had gone out to the quays in the sweet air,
To taste that thing more sweet to human breath,
Its own mad laughter at its own mad kind.
"An hour of prayer," I mused, "for men of faith."
Yet all these worshippers were only blind.
And I, no whit less blind, among them went
In search of pleasure for my punishment.

VI.

The Lyons fair! In truth it was a heaven
For idlers' eyes, a feast of curious things.
Swings, roundabouts, and shows, the Champions Seven,
Dramas of battles and the deaths of kings,
The whole Place d'Armes grown white as if with snow,
With canvas booths arrayed in triple lines,
And jugglers, lions, snakes from Mexico,
Dancers on tight ropes, clowns and columbines.
I went among them all with grave intent,
I, too, to find it may be some delight.
I was a boy and knew not what life meant,
Nor what the pleasures were men seek in it.
Only I knew that mingling with that throng,
I was a stranger a strange world among.

VII.

I had made my round, as yet with little gain
  Of undiscovered good in that gay place.
I had sought my share of pleasure, but in vain.
  Laughter was not for me, and hid her face.
I had asked for mirth. The oracles were dumb.
  No sound of folly with her tinkling feet
Had bid my own feet follow, and no home
  Was mine for merriment or musings sweet.
I had ceased to hope and almost ceased to seek,
  When, from the farthest booth of all, the bray
Of brass and drums and fiddling and the shriek
  Of a dwarf's voice invited me to stay.
The crowd, as scenting some more mirthful thing,
Surged round that booth agape and wondering.

VIII.

It was a booth no larger than the rest,
No loftier fashioned and no more sublime,
As poor a shrine as ever youth possessed
In which to worship truth revealed in time.
Yet to my soul the mean remembrance clings
With all the folly of that far fair eve,
And my pulse throbs with lost imaginings,
And passion rises from its grave to grieve.
Vain dreams, brute images! and over all
The shrill-voiced dwarf its hierarch and priest,
Vaunting its praise, a pagan prince of Baal.
It scared me as of some wild idol feast.
"The Booth of Beauty," thus it was I read,
Blazoned in scarlet letters overhead.

IX.

I stopped, I listened, and I entered in,
With half-a-dozen more, that sight to see.
"The Booth of Beauty," 'twas a name of sin
Which seemed to promise a new mystery.
There was a crowd already in the place,
And 'twixt me and the stage, now darkly hid,
The gathering evening had come down apace,
And all was dim within and overspread.
I know not by what instinct or mute proof
Of Providence it was, but this is true,
Even as I stepped 'neath that ignoble roof,
A prescience warned me there of portents new,
And a voice spoke with no uncertain sound
Warning me back as from ungodly ground.

X.

An instant, just an instant, and no more,
And it was gone, and I with eyes unsealed
Saw the bald pageant stripped to its thought's core,
And naked there to my scared eyes revealed.
Upon a throne which filled the upper space
Two female monsters sat, the first a girl
Marked like a leopard with pied arms and face,
And restless eyes aflame and teeth of pearl.
Her as we ventured near, I heard awhile
Say she was hungry, and a gleam like blood
Lighted her lips and died in a fierce smile.
A woman's hand behind me in the crowd
Clutched at my arm, and through the booth there went
A shiver of half fear, half merriment.

XI.

Beyond her sat a second monster. She
  In shape and sense was undisguisedly real,
An ox-eyed queen of full-fed majesty
  And giant height and comeliness ideal.
She too her tale related, as was due,
  In measured tones, her age, her birth, her name,
Bourgeois her parents, friends of order too,
  And good Imperialists of honest fame,
Her age eighteen, her height seven feet, her waist
  An ell and more in its circumference,
Her leg above the knee, and where was placed
  Its point of full development. . . . The sense
Of the rest I lost, for laughing half aloud
Again a woman touched me in the crowd.

XII.

She was a little woman dressed in black,
  Who stood on tiptoe with a childish air,
Her face and figure hidden in a "sacque,"
  All but her eyes and forehead and dark hair.
Her brow was pale, but it was lit with light,
  And mirth flashed out of it, it seemed in rays.
A childish face, but wise with woman's wit,
  And something, too, pathetic in its gaze.
In the bare dusk of that unseemly place
  I noted all, and this besides, a scar
Which on her cheek had left a paler trace.
  It seemed to tell its tale of love and war.
That little scar! Doubt whispered of this one,
Boy as I was, she had not lived a nun.

XIII.

A second warning, nor unheeded. Yet
The thought appealed to me as no strange thing,
Pure though I was, that love impure had set
Its seal on that fair woman in her Spring.
Her broken beauty did not mar her grace
In form or spirit. Nay, it rather moved.
It seemed a natural thing for that gay face
It should have known and suffered and been loved.
It kindled in me, too, to view it thus,
A mood of daring which was more than mine,
And made my shamefaced heart leap valorous,
And fired its courage to a zeal divine.
All this, in one short instant, as I gazed
Into her eyes, admiring, yet amazed.

XIV.

Me, too, she doubtless read. For, with her hand
  Raised as for help and pointing to a chair,
She bade me, with a gesture, part command
  And part entreaty, I would set her there.
She could not see, she said, the Queen of Love
  My eyes so coveted, and laughed and laid
Upon my lips the fingers of her glove
  When I protested at the words she said.
I hardly knew how it all came about
  But did her bidding as she would, and she
From her new vantage bore the humour out
  And mocked the more at each new mockery.
And still she held my arm and I her dress,
"Lest she should fall," she said, in waywardness.

XV.

Thus it began with laughter. But anon
The ox-eyed queen, who had resumed by rote
The tale of her perfections one by one,
Turned by some ominous chance towards the spot
Where we two stood. "And take good note," said she,
"All here is honest beauty, flesh and blood,
As any in the world. Yet, if there be
A doubt between you, let me make it good.
Which of you two will honour me so near
As to prove the truth?" My cheeks in spite of me
Flamed in the dark, and I was seized with fear
And a wild doubt lest mine the choice should be.
The little woman on the chair began
To shout aloud and bid me play the man.

XVI.

Oh, 'tis a terrible thing in early youth
  To be assailed by laughter and mute shame,
A terrible thing to be befooled forsooth
  By one's own foolish face betrayed in flame.
The little traitor, when she saw me dumb,
  Went on to clap her hands, till all and each,
Took up the jest and called on me to come
  And prove my courage in the manly breach.
The imperious queen stood waiting for me there,
  Pointing and beckoning, and the crowd closed in.
Under the cover of a wilder air
  From the brass band, the darkness and the din,
I know not how it was, with shame all red,
I broke from her away and turned and fled.

XVII.

I fled into the bosom of the night,
  Leaving the Fair behind me. I had need
Of the sweet healing darkness to my sight,
  As a bruise needs a poultice. And in speed
I went thus half through Lyons, loath to win
  Back to the crowd, and doubly loth to go
Thus foolishly transfigured to my inn.
  Strange fateful night! Even to this hour 'tis so.
Night in a city with the distant hum
  Of laughing crowds, the silence of strange streets,
My own mute footfalls and the redolent gloom
  Of oil-lit thresholds brings it back and cheats
My sorrow still to the last dreams of good
I dreamed that evening in my solitude.

XVIII.

If I have since done evil in my life,
  I was not born for evil. This I know.
My soul was a thing pure from sensual strife.
  No vice of the blood foredoomed me to this woe.
I did not love corruption. Beauty, truth,
  Justice, compassion, peace with God and man,
These were my laws, the instincts of my youth,
  And hold me still, conceal it as I can.
I did not love corruption, nor do love
  I find it ill to hate and ill to grieve.
Nature designed me for a life above
  The mere discordant dreams in which I live.
If I now go a beggar on the Earth,
I was a saint of Heaven by right of birth.

XIX.

You know the story of my birth, the name
  Which I inherited for good and ill,
The secret of my father's fame and shame,
  His tragedy and death on that dark hill.
You know at least what the world knows or knew,
  For time has taken half the lookers-on,
As it took him, and leaves his followers few,
  And those that loved him scarce or almost none.
To me, his son, there had remained the story,
  Told and retold by her who knew it best,
A mystery of love, perhaps of glory,
  A heritage to hold and a bequest.
Ah, how it loved him, that sad woman's heart,
What faith was hers and what a martyr's part!

XX.

Nor later, when with her my childhood died,
Was life less sealed to me. The Church became
My guardian next and mother deified,
Who lit within me a more subtle flame
Of constancy, and clothed me in her mood.
No sound, no voice within that sanctuary
Told me of common evil. Unsubdued
And vast and strange, a thing from which to flee,
The world lay there without us. We within,
Fenced in and folded safe in our strong home,
Knew nothing of the sorrow and the sin.
'Tis no small matter to have lived in Rome,
In the Church's very bosom and abode,
Cloistered and cradled there, a child of God.

XXI.

Thus through these griefs I had been set apart,
  As for a double priesthood. Life to me,
In those first moments when I probed my heart,
  Less an enchantress seemed than enemy.
My knowledge of the world had nothing human.
  I saw Mankind a tribe, my natural foe,
Which I must one day battle with, and Woman,
  Ah! Woman was a snare I did not know.
Indeed, it may be that already hope
  Knocked at my soul with tales it dared not own
Of woman's kindness in my horoscope.
  Man, only man I feared with eyes bent down,
Man the oppressor, who with pale lips curled
Sheds blood in the high places of the world.

XXII.

My childhood, then, had passed a mystery
  Shrouded by death, my boyhood a shut thing.
The passion of my soul as it grew free
  With growing youth, a bird with broken wing,
Knew nothing of its strength to dare or do,
  Or, if it dreamed of battle still to come,
That was its secret hidden in the blue
  Of life's great vault of tears which was its doom,
A duty of revenge some day for blood.
  Enough! You know I held me from the press
To whom base things are nothing, that I stood
  Parted from this world's weekday wickedness
By a whole legend of romance sublime,
Perhaps by the dead virtue of a crime.

XXIII.

I linger on the threshold of my youth.
If you could see me now as then I was,
A fair-faced frightened boy with eyes of truth
Scared at the world yet angry at its laws,
Plotting all plots, a blushing Cataline
Betrayed by his own cheeks, a misanthrope
In love with all things human and divine,
The very fool of fortune and high hope,
You would deny you knew me. Oh, the days
Of our absurd first manhood, rich in force,
Rich in desire of happiness and praise
Yet impotent in its heroic course,
And all for lack of that one worthless thing,
Knowledge of life and love and suffering!

XXIV.

At such an hour indeed of youth's first morn,
There is a heaving of the soul in pain,
A mighty labour as of joys unborn,
Which grieves it and disquiets it in vain.
The soul is scared at her own lack of peace,
Her cradle song is mute, and she has fled
From her old life as to a wilderness.
She finds herself awake and without bread.
'Tis then the body, her new counsellor,
Speaks in her ear, and still with eloquence
Pleads for more action, and his voice to her
Is sweet with love, and sadly she consents.
There is a day of youth which needs must come
When each must learn his life and leave his home.

XXV.

The summer I had passed in my own fashion
High in the Alps, a proselyte to toil.
I was released and free, and spent my passion
On the bare rocks as on a fruitful soil.
I had soothed my soul with labour, and its fire
Borne to those naked heights where I unfurled
My flag with new ambitions, high and higher
Even to the last bleak outposts of the world.
My soul had needed courage, and behold!
Here in these battles with the hosts of air
And rock and snow and storm she had grown bold
And proved her temper for the coming war.
This was her gain, the strife she must engage
With physical fear, her childhood's heritage.

XXVI.

A glorious triumph. On that day of days
When, standing on the summit's utmost edge
Of my first mountain-top, I viewed the maze
Which I had travelled upwards, ledge on ledge,
And all that wilderness of rock and plain
Rolled at my feet, and, when with heel fast set
On Nature's neck, I knew the giant slain,
My thrall, my prisoner, on the parapet,
I was transfigured. Slowly in me rose
The throb of courage as a sense new born.
"Even man," I cried, "man's self, my foe of foes,
The phantom of my fears, shall feel my scorn
Yet in a nobler war." And trembling then
I seemed to stand, I too, a man with men.

XXVII.

Thus was my soul enfranchised. But anon,
With courage fired to full-fledged enterprise,
And pushing still the vantage I had won,
I sought communion with a world less wise,
The living world. I mixed with not a few,
Shepherds and countrymen, and village priests,
Bagmen at inns, and all the motley crew
Which comes and goes on market days and feasts
In old-world hostelries of old-world towns.
These gave a second schooling, till the grace
Of the summer ended on the upper downs,
And, carrying still its glory on my face
I came to Lyons where these things befell.
The why and wherefore of it who shall tell?

XXVIII.

The booths were shut. The Fair was at an end,
And the crowd gone with multitudinous feet
Noisily home, or lingering still to spend
At Café doors or at the turn of the street
In twos and threes its laughter with good-night.
All turned to silence. Even my heart had peace
As, self-possessed and freed from its vain fright,
I found myself once more upon the quays.
I stopped before the theatre grown dark,
With its extinguished lamps and blank repose
A scene of melancholy sad to mark,
Made sadder too by the white moon which rose
Behind it virginal with vaporous wings,
Aloof and careless of all earthly things.

XXIX.

I had stopped to read a handbill of the play,
Caught by the lettering. Thus it was I read,
"Programme of this night's pieces, Saturday
The twentieth of October, 'X. Y. Z.,'
A piece in one act, and 'Les Bergers Fous,'
These to be followed by the well-known 'drame'
Of 'Manon Lescaut,' here brought out anew
For the first time at Lyons." And a name
Followed in giant type of one who then
Illustrious stood in all the world of folly,
The most sublime Comedian known to men,
"Mademoiselle Esther, Muse of Melancholy."
She in her part of Manon, so 'twas writ,
Three nights would play in honour infinite.

XXX.

Such was the legend. I had read it through
  Twice e'er I thought of thinking what it meant.
And as I turned with a sigh because I knew
  That I alone perhaps of all who went
Homewards that night should bid good-night to none,
  From a side door thrust open on the street
And calling as she passed in petulant tone
  To one within who seemed to rouse her heat,
"Ah, mauvais plaisant!" ere she slammed it to,
  Out stepped my little woman of the Fair.
Her face was altered, but its form and hue,
  If I had doubted in the moonlight there,
Was marked for me by that unaltered sign,
The little scar, its beauty's underline.

XXXI.

She saw me in an instant, and stopped short
With a sudden change of look from fierce to gay.
Her black eyes gleamed with triumph as they caught,
Like some wild bird of chase, their natural prey.
"Ha, ha," she cried, "c'est lui, c'est l'ingénu.
Ah, vagabond! 'Tis thus you find me out.
Standing 'en faction,' and at midnight too,
At the actor's door, with no more fear or doubt
Than any sinner of them all. Oh wise!
Who would have guessed it? No. You shall not speak.
You shall not soil your innocent lips with lies
For any foolish reason in the week,
Nor for the year together if you told
Your stories here till both of us grew old.

XXXII.

"Silence. I will not listen!" "And for what?"
She added strangely, in a softer mood.
"You see I am not angry. Do you not?
Only soft-hearted, and alas! too good.
Why did you follow me?" She took my hand
With a sudden action so devoid of guile
That I, who could not choose but understand,
Was softened too and fooled into a smile.
"Why did you follow me? Here, feel," she said,
"How my heart beats. It frightens me to find
So much of cunning in so young a head,
So young a heart,—and mine which is not blind!"
She pressed my hand to her side. In truth, her heart
Was beating there, my own heart's counterpart.

XXXIII.

She watched me curiously with mocking eyes,
  Yet tenderly, till once again her mirth
Prevailed with her, and quick in feigned surprise
  Thrusting me back, "Ah, traitor!" she broke forth,
"'Twas not for me then you were waiting there,
  Not me, poor foolish me. The Queen of Love,
The woman of the booth! She was your care!
  Monster! to dare me thus! And yet you prove
Your wit in vain, for, look, you foolish boy,
  She cannot walk the streets like you and me,
Or the town would be at her heels." Convulsed with joy
  At this new jest she laughed remorselessly,
Till I was almost angry and inclined
To leave her there. And then she changed her mind.

XXXIV.

She seemed to change as if with a change of the wind,
And growing serious sighed. "Now look," she said,
"You think me a mad woman and unkind,
But that is nonsense. I am sound of head
And not unsound of heart, ah, no, not there!
But you turn my head with your John the Baptist's face.
I will not be made jealous, so beware."
She looked entreatingly as if for grace,
And held me by the arm. "We are strangers both
Among these heavy Lyonnese. By right
We so should hold together. Tell me truth.
You never saw me, did you, till to-night?"
I said, "I came here not twelve hours ago!
Why should you think it?" "No," she broke in, "no,

XXXV.

"I do not doubt it. You have a look of truth
Which is beyond suspicion. But the world
Is as full of knaves as fools. You have your youth
And I my wisdom. Then your head is curled
Just as I like it, and your face is smooth,
And it can blush like your red innocent hands.
I saw it in an instant in the booth
That we should know each other and be friends.
It does not do to question. Look at me.
I am not pretty, yet the world's best sense
Has raved about my beauty foolishly
These five years past in every mood and tense!
Say. Would you like we should be friends for good?"
Not knowing what I said, I said I would.

XXXVI.

"We shall be friends. How friends? You must know me first.
What? Like the Pont Neuf? Should you wish it? Well,
None ever yet repented it who durst.
Oh! you shall know me as I dare not tell.
You said I was not pretty. 'Tis the paint
That ruins the complexion and the hours
Spent at the footlights. These would rob a saint,
Much more a sinner, of her natural powers.
Voilà la casse du métier! Then, this scar,
Some praise it as a beauty. They are fools.
At best it but an honour is of war,
And beauty is not measured by foot-rules.
So you forgive it me, what need we care?
Fair faces are but signs of things more fair."

XXXVII.

She went on talking like a running stream,
Without more reason or more pause or stay
Than to gather breath and then pursue her whim
Just where it led her, tender, sad, or gay.
Her moods seemed all alike to her. But soon
With a little shudder, for the wind was chill
And we had lingered on there in the moon,
She bade me follow, and I bowed my will.
The torrent of her words had drowned in me
What humour of resistance there had been,
And the last sense of danger ceased to be
In the first joy of yielding to such sin.
There is no pleasure in the world so sweet
As, being wise, to fall at folly's feet.

XXXVIII.

Who might describe the humours of that night,
The mirth, the tragedy, the grave surprise,
The treasures of fair folly infinite
Learned as a lesson from those childlike eyes?
When we had left our river of fair hope,
The world once more engulfed us in its ways,
And street on street we passed, and shop on shop,
Still loitering by to peer within and praise.
At each new stall we stopped as if in doubt,
Asking a price, and in pretence to buy.
I thought she would have worn men's patience out
With her fool's talk while I stood idly by.
And still, as each grew warm, with cunning word
She turned their wrath from surly to absurd.

XXXIX.

And so we went our way, — yes, hand in hand,
  Like two lost children in some magic wood
Baffled and baffling with enchanter's wand
  The various beasts that crossed us and withstood.
Each step was an experience. Every mood
  Of that fair woman a fresh gospelling,
Which spoke aloud to me and stirred my blood,
  To a new faith, I knew not with what sting.
One thing alone I knew or cared to know,
  Her strange companionship thus strangely won.
The past, the future, all of weal or woe
  In my old life was gone, for ever gone.
And still to this I clung as one who clings
To hope's last hencoop in the wreck of things.

XL.

How shall I tell my fall? The life of man
  Is but a tale of tumbles, this way thrown
At his beginning by mere haste of plan
  In the first gaping ditch with flowers o'ergrown;
Anon more cautious for his wounded knees,
  Yet falling still through much expectancy;
And so to age, the goal of his heart's ease,
  Stumbling in blindness on he knows not why.
How shall I tell it? As the poets tell
  Who wrap love in a garment of vain light,
Or plainly naked, the poor child of hell
  And laughter that it is and starless night?
I like the truth best. Yet this love, sad thing,
Mired and defiled, I saw it once a king.

XLI.

We came at last, alas! I see it yet,
With its open windows on the upper floor,
To a certain house still stirring, with lights set,
And just a chink left open of the door.
Here my companion stopped and bade me in;
Her dressmaker's, she said. And I, who heard
A sound of women's voices from within,
Shrank back alarmed and ready at a word
From any damsel stoutly to deny.
But "Madame Blanche," she said to ease my fears,
"Is a good soul, and far too wise to pry
Or fancy evil of her customers
At any hour of the night they choose to come,
Much less of me." And so I followed dumb.

XLII.

I followed dumb and shrinking like a thief
Close in her shadow from the women's guess,
Yet ruthlessly betrayed for my cheeks' grief
From head to foot in the tall pier-glasses.
My vagabond attire, my coat all rags,
My tattered plaid stained with the summer's dust,
The sash which bound my waist all gaps and jags,
With gaiters frayed and such sad shoes as must
Have served Ulysses at his journey's close;
All these I saw revealed to my disgrace,
My hat still crowned with its last Alpine rose,
And what she had called my "John the Baptist's face"
Red with confusion and the rage of youth,
I saw it all, the whole remorseless truth.

XLIII.

Not so my little sponsor. She, with eyes
Proudly unconscious of my fool's display,
Talked volubly to all and scorned disguise,
While Madame Blanche herself, no less than they,
Smiled us a welcome, and with upraised hands
Disclaimed excuse and led us straightway through
To an inner room as to a Conference.
There I first saw to my amazement new
That fair white mystery, a woman's dress,
And heard its language spoken. Stuffs were brought
And cards unrolled before us, braids and lace
Lauded and handled and their merits taught
To ears that listened and to eyes that saw
Their secret sense, the law within the law.

XLIV.

Sublime discussions! Let who will be wise!
These are the things that touch us and transcend.
The logic of all beauty is surprise,
The reason of all love the unseen end.
Still as they argued on of this and that,
Turning perchance to me as arbiter
Where in my corner I still speechless sat
To end their strife, my vision seemed to clear,
The scales fell from my eyes of ignorance,
The terror from my heart. One thing alone
Stood plain before me, the supreme fair chance
Of a first fortune, glorious and unknown,
Which beckoned me with no uncertain hand
To touch and taste and learn and understand.

XLV.

He who has once been happy is for aye
  Out of destruction's reach. His fortune then
Holds nothing secret, and Eternity,
  Which is a mystery to other men,
Has like a woman given him its joy.
  Time is his conquest. Life, if it should fret,
Has paid him tribute. He can bear to die.
  He who has once been happy! When I set
The world before me and survey its range,
  Its mean ambitions, its scant fantasies,
The shreds of pleasure which for lack of change
  Men wrap around them and call happiness,
The poor delights which are the tale and sum
Of the world's courage in its martyrdom,

XLVI.

When I hear laughter from a tavern door,
  When I see crowds agape and in the rain
Watching on tiptoe and with stifled roar
  To see a rocket fired or a bull slain,
When misers handle gold, when orators
  Touch strong men's hearts with glory till they weep,
When cities deck their streets for barren wars
  Which have laid waste their youth, and when I keep
Calmly the count of my own life and see
  On what poor stuff my manhood's dreams were fed
Till I too learned what dole of vanity
  Will serve a human soul for daily bread,
— Then I remember that I once was young
  And lived with Esther the world's gods among.

XLVII.

I lived with Esther, not for many days,
If days be counted by the fall of night
And the sun's rising, yet through years of praise,
If truth be timepiece of joys infinite.
And what a life it was! No vain sweet dream
Of love in idleness which all men know,
But a full drama fashioned on the theme
Of strength victorious over death and woe.
Here was no faltering. Ours the triumph was
Of that strong logic which beholds each day
As a new world to conquer, and the cause
Itself complete of a more glorious fray.
To-day our cycle was. In it sublime
We sat enthroned as on the neck of Time.

XLVIII.

For Esther was a woman most complete
  In all her ways of loving. And with me
Dealt as one deals who careless of deceit
  And rich in all things is of all things free.
She did not stop with me to feel her way
  Into my heart, because she all hearts knew,
But, like some prodigal heir of yesterday
  Just in possession, counted not her due
And grandly gave. O brave humility!
  O joy that kneels! O pride that stoops to tears!
She spent where others had demanded fee,
  Served where all service had of right been hers,
Casting her bread of life upon love's ways,
Content to find it after many days.

XLIX.

I must not speak of it. Even yet my heart
  Is but a feeble thing to fret and cry,
And it might chance to wake and with a start,
  When nights were still and stars were in the sky,
Sit up and muse upon its lonely state,
  With the same stars to mock at it as then,
And certain chords that touched might touch it yet,
  And griefs find issue and tears come again.
I must not venture farther in this mood.
  Grief is forsworn to me. I will not grieve,
Nor think too much on Esther's womanhood,
  Rather on that which was its make-believe.
And yet awhile she loved me. In this thought
I long found rest when all was come to nought.

L.

We stayed at Lyons three days, only three,
In Esther's world of wonder and renown,
She, glorious star, each night immortally
Playing her Manons to the listening town.
I glorious too, but in Love's firmament,
Watching her face by which alone I moved,
A shadow near her raptured and intent,
And seeking still the signs that I was loved.
Thrice happy days! Thrice blessed tragedy!
Her Des Grieux was I, her lover lorn
Bound to her fortunes, blest to live or die,
And faithful ever though to faith forsworn,
Waiting behind the scenes in that stage-land
To greet her exits and to squeeze her hand.

LI.

Who has not wept with Manon? Of all tales
That thrill youth's fancy or to tears or mirth
None other is there where such grief prevails,
Such passionate pity for the loves of Earth.
Who has not wept with Manon in her sin,
Wept in her punishment? What angry heart
Has been unmoved in youth to see her win
With those sad archers to the inhuman cart?
Who has not followed her beyond the seas,
And sold his life for her, and bowed his pride,
And sinned all sins to buy her back to ease,
And died all deaths to venge her when she died?
And I, blest boy, who each new happy night
When all was done still lived in her delight!

LII.

This was my term of glory. All who know
  Something of life will guess untold the end.
In love, one ever kisses for his woe,
  One lends his cheek, alas! or seems to lend,
One has the pleasure, one the penalties,
  One is in earnest, one has time to laugh,
One turns impatient from imploring eyes,
  And one in terror spells love's epitaph.
There was no wisdom in this love of mine,
  Therefore it perished earlier than the rest,
Although I poured out all my heart like wine,
  And watered it with tears, and prayed unblest
In my soul's rage to all the Saints of heaven
To give me this and yet to be forgiven.

LIII.

It might not be. Some things are possible,
And some impossible for even God.
And Esther had no soul which Heaven or Hell
Could touch by joy or soften by the rod.
She could not really love me. The day came,
How soon, how late, I need not to devise,
When passion prayed its last, and only shame
Stood for my portion in a world grown wise,
And I went forth for ever from her sight
Knowing the good and evil. On that day
I did her wrong by anger. Now life's light
Illumines all, and I behold her gay
As I first knew her in my love purblind,
Dear passionate Esther, soulless but how kind!

The Bibelot

"THE longer I contemplate human life the more I believe that we must give it, for witnesses and judges, Irony and Pity, even as the Egyptians evoked over their dead the Goddesses Isis and Nephtis. Irony and Pity are two good counsellors. The one smiles and makes life amiable; the other weeps and makes it sacred. The irony which I invoke is not cruel. It mocks neither love nor beauty. It is gentle and kind. Its laugh calms anger; and it teaches us to smile at wicked men and fools whom, without it, we might have the weakness to hate." [1]

One could go very far afield before finding another opinion which so fully sets forth the peculiar merits of what assuredly was not in the mind of its distinguished author to wit, a collection of fourteen essays by Dr. Axel Munthe, entitled Vagaries, *(London, 1898,) a little book known only to few readers on this side the Atlantic, but*

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[1] *Quoted from a recent English review on "The Ideas of Anatole France," an essay we hope to use a little later on.*

surely deserving of much wider circulation. As for the author personally we must seek for him in a foreword which he declares is offered "instead of a preface," begging us to believe that "he who has written these pages is no author." That for a score of years Dr. Munthe practiced medicine in Rome and Paris, and, still earlier, in Naples, was an active helper during the great Plague ravages in 1884; that as friend and physician he has sustained intime *relations with rich and poor, peasant and poet, artist and artist's model; that in brief he is a whole-hearted lover of man and beast, and a true confrèré of Dr. John Brown and our own and only Autocrat, are some of the things revealed by his all too few published works.*[2]

From Vagaries[3] *we have chosen two themes, old yet made forever new to the heart by their delicate rehandling.*

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2 *One other book translated from the German (?) is entitled* Letters from a Mourning City (*London, 1887;*) *a second edition appeared in 1899.*

3 Vagaries *was written in English and portions first came out in* Blackwood's *and* Murray's Magazine.

FOR APRIL:

FOUR SELECTIONS FROM THE PROSE AND POETRY OF GEORGE ELIOT.

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE MUSIC:
RAFFAELLA
By
AXEL MUNTHE.

I HAD engaged him by the year. Twice a week he came and went through his whole répertoire, and lately, out of sympathy for me, he would play the Miserere of the *Trovatore*, which was his show piece, twice over. He stood there in the middle of the street looking steadfastly up at my windows while he played, and when he had finished he would take off his hat with a "Addio Signor!"

It is well known that the barrel-organ, like the violin, gets a fuller and more sympathetic tone the older it is. The old artist had an excellent instrument, not of the modern noisy type which imitates a whole orchestra with flutes and bells and beats of drums, but a melancholy old-fashioned barrel-organ which knew how to lend a dreamy mystery to the gayest allegretto, and in whose proudest tempo di Marcia there sounded an unmistakable undertone of resignation. And in the tenderer pieces of the répertoire, where the melody, muffled and staggering like a cracked old human voice, groped its way amongst the rusty

pipes of the treble, then there was a trembling in the bass like suppressed sobs. Now and then the voice of the tired organ failed it completely, and then the old man would resignedly turn the handle during some bars of rest more touching in their eloquent silence than any music.

True, the instrument was itself very expressive, but the old man had surely his share in the sensation of melancholy which came over me whenever I heard his music. He had his beat in the poor quarter behind the Jardin des Plantes, and many times during my solitary rambles up there had I stopped and taken my place among the scanty audience of ragged street boys which surrounded him.

We made acquaintance one misty dark autumn day. I sat on a bench under the fading trees, which in vain had tried to deck the gloomy square with a little summer, and now hopelessly suffered their leaves to fall; and, like a melancholy accompaniment to my dreamy thoughts, the old barrel-organ in the slum close by coughed out the aria from the last act of the Traviata: "Addio del passato bei sogni ridenti!"

I startled as the music stopped. The old man had gone through his whole répertoire, and after a despairing inspection of his audience he resignedly tucked the monkey under his cloak and prepared to depart. I have always liked barrel-organs, and I have a sufficiently correct ear to distinguish good music from bad; so I went up and thanked him and asked him to play a little longer, unless he was too tired in the arm. I am afraid he was not spoiled by praise, for he looked at me with a sad, incredulous expression which pained me, and with an almost shy hesitation he asked me if it was any special piece I wished to hear. I left the choice to the old man. After a mysterious manipulation with some screws under the organ, which was answered from its depths by a half-smothered groan, he began slowly and with a certain solemnity to turn the handle, and with a friendly glance at me, he said, "*Questo è per gli amici.*" [1]

It was a tune I had not heard him play before, but I knew well the sweet old melody, and half aloud I searched my memory

[1] "This is for friends."

for the words of perhaps the finest folk-song of Naples:

> "Fenestra che luciva e mò non luce
> Segn' è ca Nenna mia stace malata
> S' affaccia la sorella e me lo dice:
> Nennella toja è morta e s' è aterrata
> Chiagneva sempe ca dormeva sola,
> Mò dorme in distinta compagnia."

He looked at me with a shy interest while he played, and when he had finished he bared his gray head; I also raised my hat, and thus our acquaintance was made.

It was not difficult to see that times were hard — the old man's clothes were doubtful, and the pallor of poverty lay over his withered features, where I read the story of a long life of failure. He came from the mountains around Monte Cassino, so he informed me, but where the monkey hailed from I never quite got to know.

Thus we met from time to time during my rambles in the poor quarters. Had I a moment to spare I stopped for a while to listen to a tune or two, as I saw that it gratified the old man, and since I always carried a lump of sugar in my pocket for any dog acquaintance I might possibly meet,

I soon made friends with the monkey also. The relations between the little monkey and her impresario were unusually cordial, and this notwithstanding that she had completely failed to fulfil the expectations which had been founded upon her—she had never been able to learn a single trick, the old man told me. Thus all attempts at education had long ago been abandoned, and she sat there huddled together on her barrel-organ and did nothing at all. Her face was sad, like that of most animals, and her thoughts were far away. But now and then she woke up from her dreams, and her eyes could then take a suspicious, almost malignant expression, as they lit upon some of the street boys who crowded round her tribune and tried to pull her tail, which stuck out from her little gold-laced garibaldi. To me she was always very amiable; confidently she laid her wrinkled hand in mine and absently she accepted the little attentions I was able to offer her. She was very fond of sweetmeats, and burnt almonds were, in her opinion, the most delectable thing in the world.

Since the old man had once recognised

his musical friend on a balcony of the Hôtel de l'Avenir, he often came and played under my windows. Later on he became engaged, as already said, to come regularly and play twice a week, — it may, perhaps, appear superfluous for one who was studying medicine, but the old man's terms were so small, and you know I have always been so fond of music. Besides it was the only recreation at hand — I was working hard in the Hôtel de l'Avenir, for I was to take my degree in the spring.

So passed the autumn, and the hard time came. The rich tried on the new winter fashions, and the poor shivered with the cold. It became more and more difficult for well-gloved hands to leave the warm muff or the fur-lined coat to take out a copper for the beggar, and more and more desperate became the struggle for bread amongst the problematical existences of the street. Before hopelessly-closed windows small half-frozen artistes gave concerts in the courtyards; unnoticed resounded the most telling pieces of the répertoire about *La bella Napoli* and *Santa Lucia*, while stiffened fingers twanged the mandoline, and the little

sister, shivering with cold, banged the tambourine. In vain the old street-singer sang with hoarse pathos the song about *La Gloire* and *La Patrie*, and in vain my friend played that piece *per gli amici* — thicker and thicker fell the snowflakes over the humbly-bared heads, and scarcer and scarcer fell the coppers into the outstretched hats.

Now and then I came across my friend, and we always had, as before, a kind word for one another. He was now wrapped up in an old Abruzzi cloak, and I noticed that the greater the cold became the faster did he turn the handle to keep himself warm; and towards December the Miserere itself was performed in allegretto.

The monkey had now become civilian, and wrapped up her little thin body in a long ulster such as Englishmen wear; but she was fearfully cold notwithstanding, and, forgetful of all etiquette, more and more often she jumped from the barrel-organ and crept in under the old man's cloak.

And while they were suffering out there in the cold I sat at home in my cosy, warm room, and instead of helping them, I forgot all about them, more and more taken up as

I was with my coming examination, with no thought but for myself. And then one day I suddenly left my lodgings and removed to the Hôtel Dieu to take the place of a comrade, and weeks passed before I put my foot out of the hospital.

I remember it so well, it was the very New Year's Day we met each other again. I was crossing the Place de Notre Dame, mass was just over, and the people were streaming out of the old cathedral. As usual, a row of beggars were standing before the door, imploring the charity of the church-goers. The severe winter had increased their number, and besides the usual beggars, cripples and blind, who were always by the church porch, reciting in loud voices the history of their misery, there stood a silent rank of Poverty's accidental recruits — poor fellows whose daily bread had been buried under the snow, and whose pride the cold had at last benumbed. At the farther end, and at some distance from the others, an old man stood with bent head and outstretched hat, and with painful surprise I recognised my friend in his threadbare old coat without the Abruzzi cloak, without the

barrel-organ, without the monkey. My first impulse was to go up to him, but an uneasy feeling of I do not know what held me back; I felt that I blushed and I did not move from my place. Every now and then a passer-by stopped for a moment and made as if to search his pocket, but I did not see a single copper fall into the old man's hat. The place became gradually deserted, and one beggar after another trotted off with his little earnings. At last a child came out of the church, led by a gentleman in mourning; the child pointed towards the old man, and then ran up to him and laid a silver coin in his hat. The old man humbly bowed his head in thanks, and even I, with my unfortunate absent-mindedness, was very nearly thanking the little donor also, so pleased was I. My friend carefully wrapped up the precious gift in an old pocket-handkerchief, and stooping forward, as if still carrying the barrel-organ on his back, he walked off.

I happened to be quite free that morning, and, thinking that a little walk before luncheon could do me no harm after the hospital air, I followed him at a short distance across the Seine. Once or twice I nearly caught

him up, and all but tapped him on the shoulder, with a "Buon giorno, Don Gaetano!" Yet, without exactly knowing why, I drew back at the last moment and let him get a few paces ahead of me again.

An icy wind blew straight against us, and I drew my fur cloak closer round me. But just then it suddenly struck me to ask myself why, after all, it was I who owned such a warm and comfortable fur cloak, whilst the old man who tramped along in front of me had only a threadbare old coat? And why was it for me that luncheon was waiting, and not for him? Why should I have a good blazing fire burning in my cosy room, while the old man had to wander about the streets the whole day long to find his food, and in the evening go home to his miserable garret and, unprotected against the cold of the winter night, prepare for the next day's struggle for bread?

And it suddenly dawned upon me why I had blushed when I saw him at Notre Dame, and why I could not make up my mind to go and speak to him — I felt ashamed before this old man, I felt ashamed at life's unmerited generosity to me and its severity to him.

I felt as if I had taken something from him which I ought to restore to him; and I began to wonder whether it might be the fur coat. But I got no further in my meditations, for the old man stopped and looked in at a shop window. We had just crossed the Place Maubert and turned into the Boulevard St. Germain; the boulevard was full of people, so that, without being noticed, I could approach him quite close. He was standing before an elegant confectioner's shop, and to my surprise he entered without hesitation. I took up my position before the shop window, alongside some shivering street arabs who stood there, absorbed in the contemplation of the unattainable delicacies within, and I watched the old man carefully untie his pocket-handkerchief and lay the little girl's gift upon the counter. I had hardly time to draw back before he came out with a red paper bag of sweets in his hand, and with rapid steps he started off in the direction of the Jardin des Plantes.

I was very much astonished at what I had seen, and my curiosity made me follow him. He slackened his pace at one of the

little slums behind Hôpital de la Pitié, and I saw him disappear into a dirty old house. I waited outside a minute or two, and then I groped my way through the pitch-dark entrance, climbed up a filthy staircase, and found a door slightly ajar. An icy, dark room, in the middle three ragged little children crouched together around a half-extinct brazier, in the corner the only furniture in the room—a clean iron bedstead, with crucifix and rosary hung on the wall above it, and by the window an image of the Madonna adorned with gaudy paper flowers; I was in Italy, in my poor, exiled Italy. And in the purest Tuscan the eldest sister informed me that Don Gaetano lived in the garret. I went up there and knocked, but no one answered, so I opened the door myself. The room was brightly lit up by a blazing fire. With his back towards the door, Don Gaetano was on his knees before the stove busy heating a little saucepan over the fire, beside him on the floor lay an old mattress with the well-known Abruzzi cloak thrown over it, and close by, spread out on a newspaper, were various delicacies —an orange, walnuts, and raisins, and

there also was the red paper bag. Don Gaetano dropped a lump of sugar into the saucepan, stirred it with a stick, and in a persuasive voice I heard him say, "*Che bella roba, che bella roba, quanto è buono questa latte con lo zucchero! Non piange anima mia, adesso siamo pronti!*"[1]

A slight rustling was heard beneath the Abruzzi cloak, and a black little hand was stretched out towards the red paper bag.

"*Primo il latte, primo il latte,*" admonished the old man. "*Non importa, piglio tu una,*"[2] he repented, and took a big burnt almond out of the paper bag; the little hand disappeared, and a crunching was heard under the cloak. Don Gaetano poured the warm milk in a saucer, and then he carefully lifted up a corner of the cloak. There lay the poor little monkey with heaving breast and eyes glowing with fever. Her face had become so small, and her complexion was ashy gray. The old man took her on his

1 "What nice things, what nice things, how good this milk with sugar is! Don't cry, my darling, it is ready now!"

2 "The milk first, the milk first — never mind, take one."

knees, and tenderly as a mother he poured some spoonfuls of the warm milk into her mouth. She looked with indifferent eyes towards the delicacies on the table, and absently she let her fingers pass through her master's beard. She was so tired that she could hardly hold her head up, and now and then she coughed so that her thin little body trembled, and she pressed both her hands to her temples. Don Gaetano shook his head sadly, and carefully laid the little invalid back under the cloak.

A feeble blush spread over the old man's face as he caught sight of me. I told him that I had happened to be passing by just as he was entering his house, and that I took the liberty of following him upstairs in order to bid him good-morning and to give him my new address, in the hope that he would come and play to me as before. I involuntarily looked round for the barrel-organ as I spoke, and Don Gaetano, who understood, informed me that he no longer played the organ — he sang. I glanced at the precious pile of wood beside the fireplace, at the new blanket that hung before the window to keep out the draught, at the

delicacies on the newspaper — and I also understood.

The monkey had been ill three weeks — *la febbre*, explained the old man. We knelt one at each side of the bed, and the sick animal looked at me with her mute prayer for help. Her nose was hot, as it is with sick children and dogs, her face wrinkled like that of an old, old woman, and her eyes had got quite a human expression. Her breathing was so short, and we could hear how it rattled in her throat. The diagnosis was not difficult — she had consumption. Now and again she stretched out her thin arms as if she implored us to help her, and Don Gaetano thought that she did so because she wished to be bled.[1] I would willingly have given in in this case, although opposed in principle to this treatment, if I had thought it possible that any benefit could have been derived from it; but I knew only too well how unlikely this was, and I tried my best to make Don Gaetano

[1] The lower classes in Italy still use bleeding for all kinds of diseases, and this treatment is also extended to animals. I knew a monkey in Naples who was bled twice.

understand it. Unhappily I did not know myself what there was to be done. I had at that time a friend amongst the keepers of the monkey-house in the Jardin des Plantes, and the same night he came with me to have a look at her; he said that there was nothing to be done, and that there was no hope. And he was right. For one week more the fire blazed in Don Gaetano's garret, then it was left to go out, and it became cold and dark as before in the old man's home.

True, he got his barrel-organ out from the pawn-shop, and now and then a copper did fall into his hat also. He did not die of starvation, and that was about all he asked of life.

So the spring came and I left Paris; and God knows what has become of Don Gaetano.

If you happen to hear a melancholy old barrel-organ in the courtyard, go to the window and give a penny to the poor errant musician — perhaps it is Don Gaetano! If you find that his organ disturbs you, try if you like it better by making him stand a little farther off, but don't send him away

with harshness! He has to hear so many hard words as it is; why should not we then be a little kind to him — we who love music?

THE picture was considered one of the very best in the whole Salon, and the young painter's name was on every one's lips. It was always surrounded by a group of admirers, fascinated by its beauty. She lay there on a couch of purple, and around her loveliness there fell as it were a shimmer from life's May-sun. Refined art-critics had settled her age to be at most sixteen. There was still something of the enchanting grace of the child in her slender limbs, and it was as if a veil of innocence protected her.

Who was she, the fair sleeper, the shaping of whose features was so noble, the harmony of whose limbs was so perfect? Was it true, what rumour whispered, that the original of the dazzling picture bore one of the greatest names of France, that a high-born beauty of Faubourg St. Germain had, unknown to the man, allowed the artist to behold the ideal he had sought for but never found? Who was she?

The doctor had stood there for a while listening to the murmur of praise which bore witness to the young painter's triumph,

and slowly making his way through the fashionable crowd he approached the exit. He stopped there for a moment or two watching one carriage after another roll down the Champs Elysées, and then he wandered away across Place de la Concorde and entered the Boulevard St. Germain. The clock struck seven as he passed St. Germain des Prés and he hastened his steps, for he had a long way still to go. He turned into one of the small streets near the Jardin des Plantes, and it soon seemed as if he had left Paris behind him. The streets began to darken, and narrowed into lanes, the great shops shrank into small booths, and the cafés became pot-houses. Fine coats became more and more rare, and blouses more numerous. It was nearly eight o'clock, just theatre time down on the brilliant boulevards, and up here groups of workmen wandered home after the day's toil. They looked tired and heavy-hearted, but the work was hard, already by six in the morning the bell was rung in the manufactories and workshops, and many of them had had an hour's walk to come there. Here and there stood a ragged figure with

outstretched hand, he carried no inscription on his breast telling how he became blind, he did not recite one word of the story of his misery — he did not need to do that here, for those that gave him a sou were poor themselves, and most of them had known what it meant to be hungry.

The alleys became dirtier and dirtier, and heaps of sweepings and refuse were left in the filthy gutters; it did not matter so much up here where only poor people lived.

The doctor entered an old tumble-down house, and groped his way up the slippery dark stairs as high as he could go. An old woman met him at the door — he was expected. "*Zitto, zitto!*" (hush, hush), said the old woman, with her fingers on her lips; "she sleeps." And in a whisper *la nonna* (the grandmother) reported how things had been going on since yesterday. Raffaella had not been delirious in the night, she had lain quite still and calm the whole day, only now and then she had asked to see the child, and a short while ago she had fallen asleep with the little one in her arms. Did *il signor Dottore* wish to wake her up? No, that he would not do. He sat himself down

in silence beside the old woman on the bench. They were very good friends these two, and he knew well the sad story of the family.

They were from St. Germano, the village up amongst the mountains half way between Rome and Naples, whence most of the Italian models came. They had arrived in Paris barely two years ago with a number of men and women from their neighbourhood. Raffaella's mother had caught *la fèbbre* and died at Hôtel Dieu a couple of months after their arrival, and the old woman and the grandchild had had to look after themselves alone in the foreign city.

And Raffaella had become a model like the others.

And a young artist painted her picture. He painted her beautiful girlish head, he painted her young bosom. And then fell her poor clothes, and he painted her maiden loveliness in its budding spring, in the innocent peace of the sleeping senses. She was the butterfly-winged Psyche, whose lips Eros has not yet kissed; she was Diana's nymph who, tired after hunting, unfastens her chiton and, unseen by mortal eyes,

bathes her maiden limbs in the hidden forest lake; she was the fair Dryad of the grove who falls asleep on her bed of flowers.

His last picture was ready. Fame entered the young artist's studio, and a ruined child went out from it.

They separated like good friends, he wrote down her address with a piece of charcoal on the wall, and she went to pose to another painter. So she went from studio to studio, and her innocence protected her no longer.

One day the old grandmother stood humbly at the door of the fashionable studio, and told between her sobs that Raffaella was about to become a mother. Ah yes! he remembered her well, the beautiful girl, and he put some pieces of gold in the old woman's hand and promised to try to do something for her. And he kept his word. The same evening he proposed to his comrades to make a collection for Raffaella's child, and he assumed that there was no one who had a right to refuse. There was no one who had the right to refuse. They all gave what they could, some more and some less, and more than one emptied his purse into the hat which went round for

Raffaella's child. They all thought it was such a pity for her, the beautiful girl, to have had such bad luck. They wondered what would become of her, she might of course continue to be a model, but never would she be the same as before. The sculptors all agreed that the beautiful lines of the hip could never stand the trial, and the painters knew well that the exquisite delicacy of her colouring was lost for ever. The child would of course be put out to nurse in the country, and the money collected was enough to pay for a whole year. And it was not a bad idea either to beg their friend, that foreign doctor, who was so fond of Italians, to give an eye to Raffaella, he might perhaps be useful in many future contingencies.

And the doctor, who was so fond of Italians, had often been to see her of late. Raffaella had been so ill, so ill, she had been delirious for days and nights, and this was the first quiet sleep she had had for a long time.

No, the doctor certainly did not wish to wake her up; he sat there in silence beside the old grandmother, deep in thought. He

was thinking of Raffaella's story. It was not new to him, that story, the Italian poor quarter had more than once told it him, and he had often enough read it in books. It seemed to him that what he saw in life was far simpler and far sadder than what he read in books. Nor was there in Raffaella's story anything very unusual or very sensational, no great display of feeling either of sorrow or despair, no accusations, no threat for vengeance, no attempt at suicide. Everything had gone so simply in such everyday fashion. It was not with head erect and flaming eyes that the old grandmother had stood before him who was guilty of the child's fall, but in humble resignation she had stopped at the door and sobbed out their misery, and when she left she had prayed the Madonna to reward him for his charity. The poor old woman had her reasons for this —she could not carry her head erect, for life had long since bent her neck under the yoke of daily toil; her eyes could not flame with menace, for they had too often had to beg for bread. She knew not how to accuse, for she herself had been condemned unheard to oppression; she knew not how to demand

justice, for life had meant for her one long endurance of wrongs. Her path had lain through darkness and misery, she had seen so little of life's sunlight, and her thoughts had grown so dim under her furrowed brow. She was dull, dull as an old worn-out beast of burden.

And the seducer, he was perhaps after all not more of a blackguard than many others. He had done what he could to atone for a fault, which from his point of view was hardly to be considered so very great, he had provided for a whole year for a child which he said was none of his — what could he do more? He had asked the doctor if he knew of any virtuous models, and the doctor had answered him, "No," for neither did he know of any virtuous models.

And Raffaella had borne her degradation as she had borne her poverty, without bitterness and without despair; she wept sometimes, but she accused no one, neither herself nor him who had injured her. She was resigned. Authors believe that it is so easy to jump into the Seine or to take a dose of laudanum, but it is very difficult. Raffaella was a daughter of the people, no

culture had entered into her thought-world, either with its light or its shadow, she was far too natural even to think of such a thing.

He who was cultured had brought forward the question of sending the child into the country or placing it in the *Enfants trouvés* (foundling hospital), and she who was uncultured had known of no other answer than to wind her arms still closer round her child's neck. And *la nonna* (the old grandmother), who scrubbed steps and carried coals all day, and having at last lulled the child to rest in the evening, dead-tired went to sleep with half-shut eyes and a string round her wrist, so as now and then to rock the little one's cradle; neither could she understand that it would be any relief if "*la piccerella*" were to be sent away.

The light fell on the squalid bed, and the doctor looked at his patient. Yes! it was indeed very like her, he certainly was a clever artist that young painter! Her face was only a little paler now, that painful shadow over the forehead was probably not to be seen in the bright studio where the picture was painted, those dark rings round her eyes very likely were not suitable for the

Salon. But the same perfection of form in every feature, the same noble shape of the head, the same childishly soft rounding of the cheek, the same curly locks round the beautiful brow; yes, rumour spoke true, she bore the mark of nobility on her forehead, not that of Faubourg St. Germain, but that of Hellas, she bore the features of the Venus of Milo.

It was quite still up there in the dim little garret. The doctor looked at the young mother who slept so peacefully with her child in her arms, he looked at the old woman who sat by his side fingering her rosary. With foreboding sadness he looked into the future which awaited these three, and sorrowfully his thoughts wandered along the way which lay before his poor friends.

Ah yes, Raffaella soon got well, for she was healthy with Nature's youth. Model she never became again, for she could not leave her child. She did not marry, for her people do not forgive one who has had a child by a *Signore*. With the baby at her breast she wandered about in search of work, any work whatever. Her demands were so small, but her chances were still

smaller. She found no work. The old woman still held out for a time, then she broke down and Raffaella had to provide food for three mouths. The last savings were gone, and the Sunday clothes were at the pawn-shop. Public charity did not help her, for she was a foreigner, and private charity never came near Raffaella. She had to choose between want or going on the streets. Her child lived and she chose want. The world did not reward her for her choice, for virtue hungers and freezes in the poor quarters of Paris. And she ended like so many others by *fare la Scopa*.[1] Pale and emaciated sat the child on *la nonna's* knee, and with low bent back Raffaella swept the streets where pleasure and luxury went by. Poverty had effaced her beauty, she bore the features of want and hardship. Sorrow had furrowed her brow, but the stamp of nobility was still there. Hats off for virtue in rags! It is greater than the virtue of Faubourg St. Germain!

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[1] The harbour of refuge for most of the shipwrecked ones who still can and will work. The street scavengers of Paris are to a great extent Italians.

Perhaps a clever writer could make a nice little sketch out of Raffaella's story; it is, however, as I said before, neither a very original nor a very exciting one, it is quite commonplace. But I can give you a subject for another little sketch; it is that doctor who is so fond of Italians who has hit upon it. He has been thinking it over for many years, but he never gets further than thinking. Write a story about female models and dedicate it to artists! Write it without lies and without sentimentality. Write it without exaggeration, for it needs none; without severity, for we all have need of forbearance. Tell them, the artists, how much we all like them, the light-hearted good-natured comrades, tell them how proud we are of them, the happy interpreters of our longing for beauty. But ask them why they so despise their models, ask them if they know what becomes of the originals of their female pictures!

They know it well.

If they answer you that they are young, that their temptations are greater than those of any others, then reflect if you yourself have the right to say any more to them.

But if they answer you that the fault lies with the models, then tell them to their faces that they lie. Then tell them what road the greater part of the women models take — the statistics are there and they cannot be contradicted. We know well that many of these models have themselves to blame for their misfortunes, but by far the greater part of them owe their fall to the misleading of an artist.

And look here! Is he then quite wrong, that doctor who thinks that the artist stands towards his woman model in the same position as the physician towards his woman patient? Society demands, and is right in demanding, a passionless eye from the physician, and between the physician's respect for his profession and the temptation of the man, honour has no choice. The present day ranks art higher than science, why then is not the artist's respect for his profession great enough to protect a woman model! Why are there no virtuous models? Is not the model the unknown collaborator in the artist's creation, is she not, even she, although unconsciously a humble servant in the temple of art, in that temple where

the ancients placed the statue of the chaste Pallas Athene?

Yes, a clever writer may have a good deal more to say about this, and he may also make use of that doctor's meditations if he thinks there is any meaning in them, they have at least the merit of being founded upon experience, experience of the art world of Paris as well as that of Rome.[1]

But he must not forget that it is the spoiled children of our day that he is daring to blame. Should his article be to the point he may be sure he will be very severely censured by them; let him take it as praise for *il n'y a que la vérité qui blesse!* And besides, let him remember that the world's blame is as little worth caring about as its praise.

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1 I was for ten years the confidant, the friend, and the doctor to most of the poor Italians in Paris, the greater number of whom are models. My experience during these years was a terrible one. Nine years in Rome have made the evidence still more conclusive. Of English models I know nothing and have nothing to say.

The Bibelot

I.

"MAGNIFICENT *but unreadable*"—*such was the famous verdict upon George Eliot as a poet rendered by Mr. John Morley twenty years ago.*[1] *One comes at last and reluctantly to see that much of her verse is amenable to this indictment, even as much of her later prose was based upon the tentative utterances of scientific minds,—prose that fell into that final Slough of Despond otherwise known as* Impressions of Theophrastus Such. *The Darwinism whereof one critic declared her to be but "the literary voice" has not precisely remade the world of sensation and idea, while the social philosophy of Comte has been largely relegated to the land of lost causes. But when this is said detraction must stay its effacing fingers. That which remains cannot be taken away. Consider the following passage and say if she who*

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1 "*We . . tried hard to love her poetry, but the effort has ended less in love than in a very distant homage to the majestic in intention and the sonorous in execution.*"—(*See* Critical Essays by John Morley, *Vol. III, p. 131. London, 1886.*)

wrote these words,—"a moving argument, which in after life was on her lips and in her heart,"—is likely to fade from our remembrance:

"It is conceivable that in some minds the deep pathos lying in the thought of human mortality—that we are here for a little while and then vanish away, that this earthly life is all that is given to our loved ones and to our many suffering fellowmen—lies nearer the fountains of moral emotion than the conception of extended existence."

II.

Quite recently, however, during "an afternoon" at the home of one of Boston's most gifted women, we were surprised at a revival of this very old dispute, between an admirer defending her choice against the critical battery of one who failed grievously in his estimate of Romola, *both of whom admitted that neither had read the Proem to that romance, or were familiar with the shorter but no less exquisitely modulated Prelude to* Middlemarch.

If such neglect by the cultured few be accepted as proven, how stands it with the majority—that vast body of general readers which alone makes possible the successful issue year after year of new and complete

editions of this great writer? If it is *true then is it also timely that our own sincere admiration of these wonderfully beautiful prolegomena should no longer be withheld. We have long desired to make them over to our readers, and hesitated only because they would seem to have become a common possession already. Along with these specimens of poetic prose,—prose-rhythms in fact in the opening and closing passages of the Proem to* Romola,—*the little series of 'Brother and Sister' sonnets are given, while the greatest poem that Positivism can boast brings to a fitting close what else of good and noble precedes it.*

III.

To make an end. If these four selections do not speak to the heart, we know not where to look for words that will speak to it. One searches in vain for any reference in George Eliot's letters or diary to Proem or Prelude. That the sonnets were finished on August 1, 1869, is recorded—nothing more. The pathos of a never satisfied longing for companionship exhales from this brief series of childish recollections—a longing for what nor fame nor fortune nor the love of man ever gave her; for she who wrote them lived and died a childless

woman. In a single line, as it seems to us, she surely stands revealed: "Our finest hope is finest memory."

As for the transcendental hymn which a creed wider than Agnosticism rightly claims for its own we find no record whatever. First printed in The Legend of Jubal and Other Poems *in 1874, the date of composition is given as seven years earlier. That is all we know, and it is, perhaps, enough. Frederic Myers finely said: "it received its fittest commentary when read above her grave." Even so the last great Englishwoman of genius fared forth upon the lonely way. Living or dying she was one of a great society over which change and chance are powerless:*

"There is
One great society alone on earth,
The noble Living and the noble Dead."

FOR MAY:
POEMS
BY
J. W. MACKAIL.

Four Selections
From the Prose and Poetry
of
George Eliot.

"O life, O death, O world, O time,
O grave, where all things flow,
'Tis yours to make our lot sublime
With your great weight of woe.

"Though sharpest anguish hearts may wring,
Though bosoms torn may be,
Yet suffering is a holy thing;
Without it what were we?"

ARCHBISHOP TRENCH.

"I remember how, at Cambridge, I walked with her once in the Fellows' Garden of Trinity, on an evening of rainy May; and she, stirred somewhat beyond her wont, and taking as her text the three words which have been used so often as the inspiring trumpet-calls of men,—the words *God*, *Immortality*, *Duty*,—pronounced, with terrible earnestness, how inconceivable was the *first*, how unbelievable the *second*, and yet how peremptory and absolute the *third*. Never, perhaps, have sterner accents affirmed the sovereignty of impersonal and unrecompensing Law. I listened, and night fell; her grave, majestic countenance turned toward me like a Sybil's in the gloom, it was as though she withdrew from my grasp, one by one, the two scrolls of promise, and left me the third scroll only, awful with inevitable fates. And when we stood at length and parted, amid that columnar circuit of the forest-trees, beneath the last twilight of starless skies, I seemed to be gazing, like Titus at Jerusalem, on vacant seats and empty halls,—on a sanctuary with no Presence to hallow it, and heaven left lonely of a God."

F. W. H. MYERS.
(*Essays: Modern*. 1897.)

PROEM TO ROMOLA.

MORE than three centuries and a half ago, in the mid spring-time of 1492, we are sure that the angel of the dawn, as he travelled with broad slow wing from the Levant to the Pillars of Hercules, and from the summits of the Caucasus across all the snowy Alpine ridges to the dark nakedness of the Western isles, saw nearly the same outline of firm land and unstable sea — saw the same great mountain shadows on the same valleys as he has seen to-day — saw olive mounts, and pine forests, and the broad plains green with young corn or rain-freshened grass — saw the domes and spires of cities rising by the river-sides or mingled with the sedge-like masts on the many-curved sea-coast, in the same spots where they rise to-day. And as the faint light of his course pierced into the dwellings of men, it fell, as now, on the rosy warmth of nestling children; on the haggard waking of sorrow and sickness; on the hasty uprising of the hard-handed labourer; and on the late sleep of the night-student, who had been questioning the stars or the sages, or his

own soul, for that hidden knowledge which would break through the barrier of man's brief life, and show its dark path, that seemed to bend no whither, to be an arc in an immeasurable circle of light and glory. The great river-courses which have shaped the lives of men have hardly changed; and those other streams, the life-currents that ebb and flow in human hearts, pulsate to the same great needs, the same great loves and terrors. As our thought follows close in the slow wake of the dawn, we are impressed with the broad sameness of the human lot, which never alters in the main headings of its history — hunger and labour, seed-time and harvest, love and death.

Even if, instead of following the dim day-break, our imagination pauses on a certain historical spot and awaits the fuller morning, we may see a world-famous city, which has hardly changed its outline since the days of Columbus, seeming to stand as an almost unviolated symbol, amidst the flux of human things, to remind us that we still resemble the men of the past more than we differ from them, as the great mechanical principles on which those domes and towers were raised

must make a likeness in human building that will be broader and deeper than all possible change. And doubtless, if the spirit of a Florentine citizen, whose eyes were closed for the last time while Columbus was still waiting and arguing for the three poor vessels with which he was to set sail from the port of Palos, could return from the shades and pause where our thought is pausing, he would believe that there must still be fellowship and understanding for him among the inheritors of his birthplace.

Let us suppose that such a Shade has been permitted to revisit the glimpses of the golden morning, and is standing once more on the famous hill of San Miniato, which overlooks Florence from the south.

The Spirit is clothed in his habit as he lived: the folds of his well-lined black silk garment or *lucco* hang in grave unbroken lines from neck to ankle; his plain cloth cap, with its *becchetto*, or long hanging strip of drapery, to serve as a scarf in case of need, surmounts a penetrating face, not, perhaps, very handsome, but with a firm, well-cut mouth, kept distinctly human by a close-shaven lip and chin. It is a face

charged with memories of a keen and various life passed below there on the banks of the gleaming river; and as he looks at the scene before him, the sense of familiarity is so much stronger than the perception of change, that he thinks it might be possible to descend once more amongst the streets, and take up that busy life where he left it. For it is not only the mountains and the westward-bending river that he recognises; not only the dark sides of Mount Morello opposite to him, and the long valley of the Arno that seems to stretch its grey low-tufted luxuriance to the far-off ridges of Carrara; and the steep height of Fiesole, with its crown of monastic walls and cypresses; and all the green and grey slopes sprinkled with villas which he can name as he looks at them. He sees other familiar objects much closer to his daily walks. For though he misses the seventy or more towers that once surmounted the walls, and encircled the city as with a regal diadem, his eyes will not dwell on that blank; they are drawn irresistibly to the unique tower springing, like a tall flower-stem drawn towards the sun, from the square turreted mass of the Old Palace

in the very heart of the city — the tower that looks none the worse for the four centuries that have passed since he used to walk under it. The great dome, too, greatest in the world, which, in his early boyhood, had been only a daring thought in the mind of a small, quick-eyed man — there it raises its large curves still, eclipsing the hills. And the well-known bell-towers — Giotto's, with its distant hint of rich colour, and the graceful-spired Badia, and the rest — he looked at them all from the shoulder of his nurse.

"Surely," he thinks, "Florence can still ring her bells with the solemn hammer-sound that used to beat on the hearts of her citizens and strike out the fire there. And here, on the right, stands the long dark mass of Santa Croce, where we buried our famous dead, laying the laurel on their cold brows and fanning them with the breath of praise and of banners. But Santa Croce had no spire then: we Florentines were too full of great building projects to carry them all out in stone and marble; we had our frescoes and our shrines to pay for, not to speak of rapacious condottieri, bribed royalty, and

purchased territories, and our façades and spires must needs wait. But what architect can the Frati Minori[1] have employed to build that spire for them? If it had been built in my day, Filippo Brunelleschi or Michelozzo would have devised something of another fashion than that — something worthy to crown the church of Arnolfo."

At this the Spirit, with a sigh, lets his eyes travel on to the city walls, and now he dwells on the change there with wonder at these modern times. Why have five out of the eleven convenient gates been closed? And why, above all, should the towers have been levelled that were once a glory and defence? Is the world become so peaceful, then, and do Florentines dwell in such harmony, that there are no longer conspiracies to bring ambitious exiles home again with armed bands at their back? These are difficult questions: it is easier and pleasanter to recognise the old than to account for the new. And there flows Arno, with its bridges just where they used to be — the Ponte Vecchio, least like other bridges in the

[1] The Franciscans.

world, laden with the same quaint shops where our Spirit remembers lingering a little on his way perhaps to look at the progress of that great palace which Messer Luca Pitti had set a-building with huge stones got from the Hill of Bogoli[1] close behind, or perhaps to transact a little business with the cloth-dressers in Oltrarno. The exorbitant line of the Pitti roof is hidden from San Miniato; but the yearning of the old Florentine is not to see Messer Luca's too ambitious palace which he built unto himself; it is to be down among those narrow streets and busy humming Piazze where he inherited the eager life of his fathers. Is not the anxious voting with black and white beans still going on down there? Who are the Priori in these months, eating soberly-regulated official dinners in the Palazzo Vecchio, with removes of tripe and boiled partridges, seasoned by practical jokes against the ill-fated butt among those potent signors? Are not the significant banners still hung from the windows — still distributed with decent pomp under Orcagna's Loggia every two months?

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1 Now Boboli.

Life had its zest for the old Florentine when he, too, trod the marble steps and shared in those dignities. His politics had an area as wide as his trade, which stretched from Syria to Britain, but they had also the passionate intensity, and the detailed practical interest, which could belong only to a narrow scene of corporate action; only to the members of a community shut in close by the hills and by walls of six miles' circuit, where men knew each other as they passed in the street, set their eyes every day on the memorials of their commonwealth, and were conscious of having not simply the right to vote, but the chance of being voted for. He loved his honours and his gains, the business of his counting-house, of his guild, of the public council-chamber; he loved his enmities too, and fingered the white bean which was to keep a hated name out of the *borsa* with more complacency than if it had been a golden florin. He loved to strengthen his family by a good alliance, and went home with a triumphant light in his eyes after concluding a satisfactory marriage for his son or daughter under his favourite loggia in the evening cool; he loved his game at

chess under that same loggia, and his biting jest, and even his coarse joke, as not beneath the dignity of a man eligible for the highest magistracy. He had gained an insight into all sorts of affairs at home and abroad: he had been of the "Ten" who managed the war department, of the "Eight" who attended to home discipline, of the Priori or Signori who were the heads of the executive government; he had even risen to the supreme office of Gonfaloniere; he had made one in embassies to the Pope and to the Venetians; and he had been commissary to the hired army of the Republic, directing the inglorious bloodless battles in which no man died of brave breast wounds—*virtuosi colpi*—but only of casual falls and tramplings. And in this way he had learned to distrust men without bitterness; looking on life mainly as a game of skill, but not dead to traditions of heroism and clean-handed honour. For the human soul is hospitable, and will entertain conflicting sentiments and contradictory opinions with much impartiality. It was his pride besides, that he was duly tinctured with the learning of his age, and judged not altogether with the

vulgar, but in harmony with the ancients: he, too, in his prime, had been eager for the most correct manuscripts, and had paid many florins for antique vases and for disinterred busts of the ancient immortals — some, perhaps, *truncis naribus*, wanting as to the nose, but not the less authentic; and in his old age he had made haste to look at the first sheets of that fine Homer which was among the early glories of the Florentine press. But he had not, for all that, neglected to hang up a waxen image or double of himself under the protection of the Madonna Annunziata, or to do penance for his sins in large gifts to the shrines of saints whose lives had not been modelled on the study of the classics; he had not even neglected making liberal bequests towards buildings for the Frati, against whom he had levelled many a jest.

For the Unseen Powers were mighty. Who knew — who was sure — that there was *any* name given to them behind which there was no angry force to be appeased, no intercessory pity to be won? Were not gems medicinal, though they only pressed the finger? Were not all things charged

with occult virtues? Lucretius might be right — he was an ancient, and a great poet; Luigi Pulci, too, who was suspected of not believing anything from the roof upward *(dal tetto in su)*, had very much the air of being right over the supper-table, when the wine and jests were circulating fast, though he was only a poet in the vulgar tongue. There were even learned personages who maintained that Aristotle, wisest of men (unless, indeed, Plato were wiser?) was a thoroughly irreligious philosopher; and a liberal scholar must entertain all speculations. But the negatives might, after all, prove false; nay, seemed manifestly false, as the circling hours swept past him, and turned round with graver faces. For had not the world become Christian? Had he not been baptised in San Giovanni, where the dome is awful with the symbols of coming judgment, and where the altar bears a crucified Image disturbing to perfect complacency in one's self and the world? Our resuscitated Spirit was not a pagan philosopher, nor a philosophising pagan poet, but a man of the fifteenth century, inheriting its strange web of belief and unbelief; of Epicurean levity

and fetichistic dread; of pedantic impossible ethics uttered by rote, and crude passions acted out with childish impulsiveness; of inclination towards a self-indulgent paganism, and inevitable subjection to that human conscience which, in the unrest of a new growth, was filling the air with strange prophesies and presentiments.

He had smiled, perhaps, and shaken his head dubiously, as he heard simple folk talk of a Pope Angelico, who was to come by-and-by and bring in a new order of things, to purify the Church from simony, and the lives of the clergy from scandal — a state of affairs too different from what existed under Innocent the Eighth for a shrewd merchant and politician to regard the prospect as worthy of entering into his calculations. But he felt the evils of the time, nevertheless; for he was a man of public spirit, and public spirit can never be wholly immoral, since its essence is care for a common good. That very Quaresima or Lent of 1492 in which he died, still in his erect old age, he had listened in San Lorenzo, not without a mixture of satisfaction, to the preaching of a Dominican Friar, named Girolamo

Savonarola, who denounced with a rare boldness the worldliness and vicious habits of the clergy, and insisted on the duty of Christian men not to live for their own ease when wrong was triumphing in high places, and not to spend their wealth in outward pomp even in the churches, when their fellow-citizens were suffering from want and sickness. The Frate carried his doctrine rather too far for elderly ears; yet it was a memorable thing to see a preacher move his audience to such a pitch that the women even took off their ornaments, and delivered them up to be sold for the benefit of the needy.

"He was a noteworthy man, that Prior of San Marco," thinks our Spirit; "somewhat arrogant and extreme, perhaps, especially in his denunciations of speedy vengeance. Ah, *Iddio non paga il Sabato*[1] — the wages of men's sins often linger in their payment, and I myself saw much established wickedness of long-standing prosperity. But a Frate Predicatore who wanted to move the people — how could he be moderate? He

[1] "God does not pay on a Saturday."

might have been a little less defiant and curt, though, to Lorenzo de' Medici, whose family had been the very makers of San Marco: was that quarrel ever made up? And our Lorenzo himself, with the dim outward eyes and the subtle inward vision, did he get over that illness at Careggi? It was but a sad, uneasy-looking face that he would carry out of the world which had given him so much, and there were strong suspicions that his handsome son would play the part of Rehoboam. How has it all turned out? Which party is likely to be banished and have its houses sacked just now? Is there any successor of the incomparable Lorenzo, to whom the great Turk is so gracious as to send over presents of rare animals, rare relics, rare manuscripts, or fugitive enemies, suited to the tastes of a Christian Magnifico who is at once lettered and devout — and also slightly vindictive? And what famous scholar is dictating the Latin letters of the Republic — what fiery philosopher is lecturing on Dante in the Duomo, and going home to write bitter invectives against the father and mother of the bad critic who may have found fault with his classical spelling? Are

our wiser heads leaning towards alliance with the Pope and the Regno,[1] or are they rather inclining their ears to the orators of France and of Milan?

"There is knowledge of these things to be had in the streets below, on the beloved *marmi* in front of the churches, and under the sheltering Loggie, where surely our citizens have still their gossip and debates, their bitter and merry jests as of old. For are not the well-remembered buildings all there? The changes have not been so great in those uncounted years. I will go down and hear — I will tread the familiar pavement, and hear once again the speech of Florentines."

Go not down, good Spirit! for the changes are great and the speech of Florentines would sound as a riddle in your ears. Or, if you go, mingle with no politicians on the *marmi*, or elsewhere; ask no questions about trade in the Calimara; confuse yourself with no inquiries into scholarship, official or monastic. Only look at the sunlight and

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[1] The name given to Naples by way of distinction among the Italian States.

shadows on the grand walls that were built solidly, and have endured in their grandeur; look at the faces of the little children, making another sunlight amid the shadows of age; look, if you will, into the churches, and hear the same chants, see the same images as of old — the images of willing anguish for a great end, of beneficent love and ascending glory; see upturned living faces, and lips moving to the old prayers for help. These things have not changed. The sunlight and shadows bring their old beauty and waken the old heart-strains at morning, noon, and eventide; the little children are still the symbol of the eternal marriage between love and duty; and men still yearn for the reign of peace and righteousness — still own *that* life to be the highest which is a conscious voluntary sacrifice. For the Pope Angelico is not come yet.

PRELUDE TO MIDDLEMARCH.

WHO that cares much to know the history of man, and how the mysterious mixture behaves under the varying experiments of Time, has not dwelt, at least briefly, on the life of Saint Theresa, has not smiled with some gentleness at the thought of the little girl walking forth one morning hand-in-hand with her still smaller brother, to go and seek martyrdom in the country of the Moors? Out they toddled from rugged Avila, wide-eyed and helpless-looking as two fawns, but with human hearts, already beating to a national idea; until domestic reality met them in the shape of uncles, and turned them back from their great resolve. That child-pilgrimage was a fit beginning. Theresa's passionate, ideal nature demanded an epic life: what were many-volumed romances of chivalry and the social conquests of a brilliant girl to her? Her flame quickly burned up that light fuel; and, fed from within, soared after some illimitable satisfaction, some object which would never justify weariness, which would reconcile self-despair with the rapturous consciousness of

life beyond self. She found her epos in the reform of a religious order.

That Spanish woman who lived three hundred years ago, was certainly not the last of her kind. Many Theresas have been born who found for themselves no epic life wherein there was a constant unfolding of far-resonant action; perhaps only a life of mistakes, the offspring of a certain spiritual grandeur ill-matched with the meanness of opportunity; perhaps a tragic failure which found no sacred poet and sank unwept into oblivion. With dim lights and tangled circumstance they tried to shape their thought and deed in noble agreement; but after all, to common eyes their struggles seemed mere inconsistency and formlessness; for these later-born Theresas were helped by no coherent social faith and order which could perform the function of knowledge for the ardently willing soul. Their ardour alternated between a vague ideal and the common yearning of womanhood; so that the one was disapproved as extravagance, and the other condemned as a lapse.

Some have felt that these blundering lives

are due to the inconvenient indefiniteness with which the Supreme Power has fashioned the natures of women: if there were one level of feminine incompetence as strict as the ability to count three and no more, the social lot of women might be treated with scientific certitude. Meanwhile the indefiniteness remains, and the limits of variation are really much wider than any one would imagine from the sameness of women's coiffure and the favourite love-stories in prose and verse. Here and there a cygnet is reared uneasily among the ducklings in the brown pond, and never finds the living stream in fellowship with its own oary-footed kind. Here and there is born a Saint Theresa, foundress of nothing, whose loving heart-beats and sobs after an unattained goodness tremble off and are dispersed among hindrances, instead of centering in some long-recognisable deed.

I.

I CANNOT choose but think upon the time
When our two lives grew like two buds that kiss
At lightest thrill from the bee's swinging chime,
Because the one so near the other is.

He was the elder and a little man
Of forty inches, bound to show no dread,
And I the girl that puppy-like now ran,
Now lagged behind my brother's larger tread.

I held him wise, and when he talked to me
Of snakes and birds, and which God loved the best,
I thought his knowledge marked the boundary
Where men grew blind, though angels knew the rest.

If he said "Hush!" I tried to hold my breath
Wherever he said "Come!" I stepped in faith.

II.

Long years have left their writing on my brow,
But yet the freshness and the dew-fed beam
Of those young mornings are about me now,
When we two wandered toward the far-off stream

With rod and line. Our basket held a store
Baked for us only, and I thought with joy
That I should have my share, though he had more,
Because he was the elder and a boy.

The firmaments of daisies since to me
Have had those mornings in their opening eyes,
The bunchèd cowslip's pale transparency
Carries that sunshine of sweet memories,

And wild-rose branches take their finest scent
From those blest hours of infantine content.

III.

Our mother bade us keep the trodden ways,
Stroked down my tippet, set my brother's frill,
Then with the benediction of her gaze
Clung to us lessening, and pursued us still

Across the homestead to the rookery elms,
Whose tall old trunks had each a grassy mound,
So rich for us, we counted them as realms
With varied products: here were earth-nuts found,

And here the Lady-fingers in deep shade;
Here sloping toward the Moat the rushes grew,
The large to split for pith, the small to braid;
While over all the dark rooks cawing flew,

And made a happy strange solemnity,
A deep-toned chant from life unknown to me.

IV.

Our meadow-path had memorable spots:
One where it bridged a tiny rivulet,
Deep hid by tangled blue Forget-me-nots;
And all along the waving grasses met

My little palm, or nodded to my cheek,
When flowers with upturned faces gazing drew
My wonder downward, seeming all to speak
With eyes of souls that dumbly heard and knew.

Then came the copse, where wild things rushed unseen,
And black-scathed grass betrayed the past abode
Of mystic gypsies, who still lurked between
Me and each hidden distance of the road.

A gypsy once had startled me at play,
Blotting with her dark smile my sunny day.

V.

Thus rambling we were schooled in deepest lore,
And learned the meanings that give words a soul,
The fear, the love, the primal passionate store,
Whose shaping impulses make manhood whole.

Those hours were seed to all my after good;
My infant gladness, through eye, ear, and touch,
Took easily as warmth a various food
To nourish the sweet skill of loving much.

For who in age shall roam the earth and find
Reasons for loving that will strike out love
With sudden rod from the hard year-pressed mind?
Were reasons sown as thick as stars above,

'Tis love must see them, as the eye sees light:
Day is but Number to the darkened sight.

VI.

Our brown canal was endless to my thought;
And on its banks I sat in dreamy peace,
Unknowing how the good I loved was wrought,
Untroubled by the fear that it would cease.

Slowly the barges floated into view
Rounding a grassy hill to me sublime
With some Unknown beyond it, whither flew
The parting cuckoo toward a fresh spring time.

The wide-arched bridge, the scented elder-flowers,
The wondrous watery rings that died too soon,
The echoes of the quarry, the still hours
With white robe sweeping-on the shadeless noon,

Were but my growing self, are part of me,
My present Past, my root of piety.

VII.

Those long days measured by my little feet
Had chronicles which yield me many a text;
Where irony still finds an image meet
Of full-grown judgments in this world perplext.

One day my brother left me in high charge,
To mind the rod, while he went seeking bait,
And bade me, when I saw a nearing barge,
Snatch out the line, lest he should come too late.

Proud of the task, I watched with all my might
For one whole minute, till my eyes grew wide,
Till sky and earth took on a strange new light
And seemed a dream-world floating on some tide —

A fair pavilioned boat for me alone
Bearing me onward through the vast unknown.

VIII.

But sudden came the barge's pitch-black prow,
Nearer and angrier came my brother's cry,
And all my soul was quivering fear, when lo!
Upon the imperilled line, suspended high,

A silver perch! My guilt that won the prey,
Now turned to merit, had a guerdon rich
Of hugs and praises, and made merry play,
Until my triumph reached its highest pitch

When all at home were told the wondrous feat,
And how the little sister had fished well.
In secret, though my fortune tasted sweet,
I wondered why this happiness befell.

"The little lass had luck," the gardener said:
And so I learned, luck was with glory wed.

IX.

We had the self-same world enlarged for each
By loving difference of girl and boy:
The fruit that hung on high beyond my reach
He plucked for me, and oft he must employ

A measuring glance to guide my tiny shoe
Where lay firm stepping-stones, or call to mind
"This thing I like my sister may not do,
For she is little, and I must be kind."

Thus boyish Will the nobler mastery learned
Where inward vision over impulse reigns,
Widening its life with separate life discerned,
A Like unlike, a Self that self restrains.

His years with others must the sweeter be
For those brief days he spent in loving me.

X.

His sorrow was my sorrow, and his joy
Sent little leaps and laughs through all my frame;
My doll seemed lifeless and no girlish toy
Had any reason when my brother came.

I knelt with him at marbles, marked his fling
Cut the ringed stem and make the apple drop,
Or watched him winding close the spiral string
That looped the orbits of the humming top.

Grasped by such fellowship my vagrant thought
Ceased with dream-fruit dream-wishes to fulfil;
My aëry-picturing fantasy was taught
Subjection to the harder, truer skill

That seeks with deeds to grave a thought-tracked line,
And by "What is," "What will be" to define.

XI.

School parted us; we never found again
That childish world where our two spirits mingled
Like scents from varying roses that remain
One sweetness, nor can evermore be singled.

Yet the twin habit of that early time
Lingered for long about the heart and tongue:
We had been natives of one happy clime,
And its dear accent to our utterance clung.

Till the dire years whose awful name is Change
Had grasped our souls still yearning in divorce,
And pitiless shaped them in two forms that range
Two elements which sever their life's course.

But were another childhood-world my share,
I would be born a little sister there.

1869.

"O MAY I JOIN THE CHOIR INVISIBLE."

Longum illud tempus, quum non ero, magis me movet, quam hoc exiguum.—CICERO, ad Att., xii. 18.

O MAY I join the choir invisible
Of those immortal dead who live again
In minds made better by their presence: live
In pulses stirred to generosity,
In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
For miserable aims that end with self,
In thoughts sublime that pierce the night like stars,
And with their mild persistence urge man's search
To vaster issues.

So to live is heaven:
To make undying music in the world,
Breathing as beauteous order that controls
With growing sway the growing life of man.
So we inherit that sweet purity
For which we struggled, failed, and agonised
With widening retrospect that bred despair.
Rebellious flesh that would not be subdued,
A vicious parent shaming still its child
Poor anxious penitence, is quick dissolved;
Its discords, quenched by meeting harmonies,
Die in the large and charitable air.
And all our rarer, better, truer self,
That sobbed religiously in yearning song,
That watched to ease the burthen of the world,

Laboriously tracing what must be,
And what may yet be better — saw within
A worthier image for the sanctuary,
And shaped it forth before the multitude
Divinely human, raising worship so
To higher reverence more mixed with love —
That better self shall live till human Time
Shall fold its eyelids, and the human sky
Be gathered like a scroll within the tomb
Unread for ever.

This is life to come,
Which martyred men have made more glorious
For us who strive to follow. May I reach
That purest heaven, be to other souls
The cup of strength in some great agony,
Enkindle generous ardour, feed pure love,
Beget the smiles that have no cruelty —
Be the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense.
So shall I join the choir invisible
Whose music is the gladness of the world.

1867.

The Bibelot

THE *inadequacy of modern anthologies of verse is nowhere more evident than that in their pages the poetry of John William Mackail remains an unknown and negligible quantity. Even in Mr. Stedman's* Victorian Anthology, *which some have unjustly thought to err on the side of excess, only the two sonnets entitled* An Etruscan Ring *are given,—beautiful specimens indeed, but absolutely unsatisfying as to quantity. To right this poetic wrong we now reprint and, preferably, as it originally appeared, "that delicate romance called* In Scheria," *together with a few other pieces from* Love's Looking Glass *which in our judgment make good Mr. Mackail's claim upon the attention of all lovers of lovely verse over sea.*

For many of our readers the threnody On the Death of Arnold Toynbee *will be found to contain something other than an echo of the diviner music of* Lycidas. *Here an exquisite original utterance in spirit and form akin to "the immortal chants of old," is plainly discoverable; while in the* Aubade, *a beautiful little*

prothalamion, as well as in the five sonnets selected by us there inheres a quality which easily places their author beside the better known poets of to-day — Austin Dobson, Edmund Gosse and Andrew Lang. It is however in a single quatrain that we feel how poignantly the classics have tinctured his style. In this solitary example there is the austere self-restraint, the concision, the simple pathos of the finest Greek epigram. [1]

Inevitably the mind goes back to "The Master of the Portico [who] died young; does he sleep in the quiet embrace of earth, or live in the joy of the other world?" In such reminders of the glory that was Greece — and there are many of them in Mr. Mackail's verse, — is revealed once and forever the high clear note of perdurable lyric joy.

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[1] *In memory of William Young Sellar, the distinguished author of* Roman Poets of the Republic *(1863, and several later editions),* The Roman Poets of the Augustan Age: Virgil, *(1877) and its sequel which he did not live to see through the press,* Horace and the Elegiac Poets, *(1891). "He is buried in the churchyard of Dalry, on a grassy slope that takes the westering sun. The Ken flows by his grave, and by the tomb of the Covenanters who fell in the troublous times. 'It might make one in love with death to be buried in so sweet a place.'" (See memoir by Andrew Lang prefixed to the last named volume.)*

N SCHERIA AND
OTHER POEMS
By
J. W. MACKAIL.

A DEDICATION.

O sweetest face of all the faces
About my way,
A light for night and lonely places,
A day in day;

If you will touch and take and pardon
What I can give,
Take this, a flower, into your garden,
And bid it live.

It is not worth your love or praises
For aught its own;
Yet Proserpine would smile on daisies
Sicilian-grown;

And so beneath your smile a minute
May this rest too,
Although the only virtue in it
Be love of you.

J. W. MACKAIL.

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JOHN WILLIAM MACKAIL, M. A., LL. D., a former fellow of Balliol College, Oxford, was born in 1859, and has published the following works :

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PART I.

"When the star was brightest aloft that goes ever heralding the dawning of the daylight, then the sea-travelling ship drew nigh to the island." — *Odyssey*, b. xiii. ll. 93-5.

By this they have the island well in sight,
Its faint fields gleaming through the mist; all night
Have they swept on, the dark waves off the stem
Gurgling; and now the morning star is bright.

Only four days ago with cart and mules
We drove to where the running water cools
The round white pebbles, slipping over them,
In the bright meadow-bordered river pools.

There came he on us from the forest dim,
Sea worn, but like a god in face and limb;
Even a king's daughter, wonderful and fair,
Might lose her heart unblamed to one like him.

O splendour of the sunset as we went
Past the ploughed fields to where the poplars bent
About Athene's spring that, rising there,
Down the King's Meadow its white water sent!

And there I left him, and drove down apace
Between the shipyards, through the market-place,
  While all the air seem'd sweet and musical,
For next day I should see him face to face,

And the day after, and for ever thus:
For he would stay here and be one of us,
  Dwelling at ease within our palace hall
Clad in soft raiment, great and glorious.

Ah me, the ways untrod, the words unsaid!
The tender memories unremembered!
  The dreadful presence of what might have been,
And life eternal of things done and dead!

One word of parting was to serve for all,
One last short word, when to the festival
  He came at evening, his face flushed and keen
With thoughts of home; and high along the hall

The great gold statues held their torches red.
I spoke, with loud seas swirling in my head,
  Farewell: remember that to me this day
Thou owest thy life's ransom. Then he said

Some words in answer: his voice sounded dim,
Far off: the silver pillars seemed to swim
  Before me; and he spoke and passed away,
And that was the last word I had of him.

All the next they sat along the hall
And feasted till the sun began to fall,
  And the last healths were drunk; then silently
The oarsmen, and he far above them all,

Went shorewards, where the swift ship rocking lay;
And the sun sank, and all the paths were grey;
  Then bent they to the oars, and murmuringly
The purple water cleft and gave them way.

The twisting-horned slow-swinging oxen low
Across the fields: light waves in even flow
  Plash on the beach: but when he went from us
The morning and the sunlight seemed to go.

The gods are angry: we shall never be
Now as of old, when far from all men we
  Dwelt in a lonely land and languorous,
Circled and sundered by the sleeping sea.

Yea, the Olympians then were wont to go
Among us, visible godheads, to and fro;
  So far we lived from any sight or touch
Of evil, in the sea's engirdling flow.

What now if Lord Poseidon, as men say,
Be wroth against us, and will choke the bay
  With a great mountain? — yet I care not much:
All things are grown the same since yesterday.

Why should I live where everything goes wrong,
Where hope is dead and only grief lasts long?
I will have rest among the asphodel;
For death is stronger, though my love be strong.

There will I see the women he did see,
Leda and Tyro and Antiope
And Ariadne, queens that loved too well
Of old, and ask them if they loved like me.

The last white stars grow fainter one by one;
The folding mists rise up to meet the sun;
Birds twitter on our dewy orchard trees;
Day comes: alas, my day is nearly done.

(He is on land in Ithaca by this.)
Come now, I pray thee, and with one soft kiss
Draw the life out of me and give me ease,
Queen golden-shafted, maiden Artemis.

"The sailing of Cinyras, which he told to Lucianus and his fellows, being released out of prison in the Five Islands, and joining them thereafter in the City of Lamps." — *Vera Historia*, b. iii. ch. 7.

Thence we sailed forward for a night and day,
Across blue breadths of water, touched with spray
  Beneath a south-west wind, that steadily
Sped us along our undiscovered way.

But when, gold clouds about him for attire,
The low broad sun, a lamp of crimson fire,
  Sank in the west, we looked across the sea,
And saw far off the land of our desire.

One mountain peak where sky and water ceased,
Rising against the flush that girt the east,
  Snow-crowned, steep-falling, while our ship ran on,
Above the purple waste of waves increased.

And the sun sank, and all the sea was grey
Before us; and behind us, where the day
  Lingered north-westward, still the water shone
Opaline, where the keel had cloven its way.

So we sailed forward through the falling night
In the night wind, while ever on our right
  Orion wheeled his slowly blazing belt,
And two large planets rose and sank from sight

Low in the south : and now the stars outspread
Drew westward, and the summer dew was shed
  Wet on the deck and cordage, and we felt
Rather than saw the island, straight ahead,

A vast low shadow in the glimmering sea ;
Whereon the breaking rollers ceaselessly
  Moaned through the darkness as they struck the sand
On that untrodden shore where we would be.

At last we saw their white foam faintly shine
Around our feet, and on the extreme sea line
  We beached the ship, and leapt ourselves on land,
And sleeping waited for the morn divine.

But when the rosy fingered morn on high,
The lady of the light, had climbed the sky,
  We rose and sought about us, where the way
Up to the city of our search might lie.

A mile of river meadow, where the grass
Knee-deep and dewy swayed to let us pass,
  We crossed, while through the morning misty-grey
Shot gleams of colour as from shining brass.

The air was still around us; only nigh
Upon our left the river murmured by;
And far behind the lapping waves at play
Washed on the shingle undistinguishably.

Then the path turned and left the meadow land,
Winding through cornfields high on either hand,
Till on the ridge we climbed, where nigh the way
About a fountain many poplars stand.

And now we faced the morning; and the brown
Heads of the ripe wheat were bowed softly down
And the mist broken in the morning breeze:
And looking forward we could see the town.

A road and double row of shipyards ran
Between two bays to where the walls began,
With a white temple and palace girt with trees
Beyond, but nowhere any sign of man.

Then we descended towards it, and on all
A silence came; we did not speak or call;
And our dark-eyed sweet-voicèd passenger
Led on, until we came below the wall.

But as we entered — how can mortal tell
In mortal words the marvel that befel?
Whether you will believe I hardly care;
I know I should have disbelieved as well —

Suddenly out of nothing seemed to spring
All round us, clasping us as in a ring,
  Whence risen or how passed through is marvellous,
A mountain, vast and overshadowing.

Sheer-sided it engirt us, towering high
All round, but open far above, whereby
  Some little light fell down and came to us;
So that we saw the stars within the sky,

The seven stars sickle-wise above our head.
And we walk dumbly on, astonished,
  Unwitting what we did or whence we came,
Following where the twilit pathway led.

At last a gleam of firelight led us on
To where afar the palace doorway shone,
  Lit as for banquet; but the flickering flame
Fell on bare places whence the guests were gone.

Faintly the scent of burning cedar rolled
About the tapestries that fold on fold
  Drooped on the walls: in double line thereby
Stood torches held by torch-bearers of gold.

There, on a couch with spices overstrewn,
And coverings coruscant with precious stone,
  Clad in a robe of strange Sidonian dye
Sea-coloured, lay a sleeping girl alone.

Breathless we stood, and did not dare to stir,
Fearing some wizardry still deadlier;
  But he who led us half restrained a cry,
And went straight forward and stooped down to her.

Lo, when a soft rain from the warm wet south
Lights on the grass that pants at noon for drouth,
  Even so, so softly and so tenderly,
He bent above her and kissed her on the mouth.

And in that moment's space from shore and bay
The mountain without hands was rolled away,
  And all around us freer and splendider
Than ever elsewhere poured the golden day

But through the girl a quiver limb by limb
Ran, and her dark eyes opened and grew dim,
  As without any word he grew to her,
Trembling all over; and she grew to him.

And when I turned my eyes away from this,
Giddy with sight of their new lover's bliss,
  My eyes upon the shining land came down
That seemed no longer strange: I could not miss

That mountain outline and that curve of shore,
That harbour with the swingingships that bore
  No rudder on their crooked sterns: the town
And people seemed as things long known before.

As thus I wondered, like a sound long spent
In dreams re-echoed, through my lips there went
  The old surging rhythm of "these Phæacian men
Who dwelt of old time nigh the violent

Tribe of the Cyclops, in the lawns outspread
Of Hypereia, and were sore bestead
  For lack of might before their raids: so then
Divine Nausithoüs raised them up and led

And set in Scheria, far from men that win
Wealth by their trade, and walled the city in,
  And builded houses and made temples fair,
And gave them share and share of tilth therein;

But he ere now was gone, struck down of fate,
To darkness, and Alcinoüs held his state,
  Skilled in wise counsel of the gods; and there
Grey-eyed Athene lighted at his gate."

This was the land that many men desire,
In other lands where other pleasures tire.
  Yet one alone might there find resting-place,
Having attained through many a flood and fire;

Even he who sailed with us across the wan
Reaches of tossing water. Not a man
  But named him now by name, and in his face
Gazed long, and knew him for the Ithacan.

For us, our resting was not won as yet,
For other shores our windy sails were set;
Ah, and we might not sojourn in the place
Where they who sojourn all their pain forget.

So but short time we lingered: for the wind
Fair streaming eastward blew and brought to mind
The old companions of our wandering race,
Whose swifter sails had left our crew behind.

And autumn grew, and swallows on the wing
Gathered for flight, and songs that reapers sing
Were over, and along the field paths went
Girls with piled baskets red for vintaging.

And the time neared of wrecks on sea and sand,
And streaming storms on many a wave-lashed strand
Without, tho' here no wind were violent,
Nor storm could trouble that enchanted land.

For the last time we feasted there arow
In the king's palace, when the sun grew low,
Deep into night with all our company;
And in the morning we embarked to go.

The bay lay quiet in the slant sunshine,
The white rocks quivering in it; but, divine,
Fresh and wind-stirred, far out the open sea
Rolled in a rough green violet-hollowed line.

We entered in and at the thwarts sate down ;
And at our going all the Scherian town
Stood thronged to speed us ; softly in the heat
The water rippled through the oar-blades brown.

And through the palace garden he and she,
Hand clasped in hand, came down beside the sea,
And hailed us one by one with voices sweet,
And bade farewell and all prosperity.

Then our oars dipped together, and the spray
Flashed in a million sparkles round our way,
As we with rowing swift and strenuous
Shot out across the sleepy sunlit bay.

There on the white sea verge, till all the strand
Grew dim behind us, still I saw them stand
In the low sunlight : if they looked at us
I know not ; but they stood there hand in hand.

AUBADE.

(FOR C. H. S., SEPTEMBER, 1882.)

AWAKE! for day afar
Behind the morning star
Climbing, has flooded down on hill and lawn.
In the pure western distance, range by range,
The purple mountain ridges counterchange
Shadow and gleam beneath the skirts of dawn.
Mist-veiled, the wood and rill,
The harvest field with autumn dew impearled,
The long white village clinging on the hill,
Shine in the light that lightens all the world.

Awake! for ere to-night
Have hid to-day's delight,
Or darkness stopped the busy harvesters,
Hymen must here hold revel for a space,
And bridal chants fill all the echoing place.
With flute and viol, and not without a verse,
Must one go forth to-day
To meet the welcome of her marriage morn,
Must one arise and take her southern way,
And leave the pastoral valley half-forlorn.

Hail and fair speed prolong
To him and her, O song!
Who meet this day no more on earth to part.

Long life and happiness and golden ease,
Sweet songs and soft confederate silences,
And children's laughter satisfy their heart.
Be this September morn,
Fragrant and festal in its white array,
The first of many and many yet unborn
More and much more abundant than to-day.

And though she leave us thus,
How often back to us
Shall she again with matron footstep come,
To teach her children each memorial spot,
And keep her maiden memory unforgot,
Unlost the earlier in the newer home!
Often by holm and glen
She shall retrace the wingèd seasons' flight;
Often shall watch the silver-swirling Ken
Laugh to the sun or glimmer in the night.

So, with long years and sweet
Stretched out before their feet,
May they the lengthening slopes of life ascend;
Find shade and shelter and cool waters' flow
When the sun burns; and when the sun draws low,
Sweet sleep and grassy quiet in the end,
Here, where no lovelier ground
Stands open to the mute perpetual sky;
The eternal mountains watching all around,
The pastoral river always rippling by.

Or, if this life of ours,
With light and shade and showers,
Be but the dream that we must rise and break;
If he at last, that shadowy form, if he
Who keeps the gate of immortality,
Come as the Morning Star to bid us wake,
What can our love yet pray
For those we love, what better, fairer thing,
Than a long gracious night before the day,
Good dreams and sweet, and soft awakening?

Ah, and to me it seems
That even these earthly dreams
May forge a chain that shall outlast the night:
That loved and lover for the old love's sake
Will turn to one another when they wake,
With all the known and with a new delight;
To find that flower full-blown
Whose bud and promise cheered their mortal state;
To dwell for ever in that House unknown,
Soul grown with soul one and inseparate.

. Awake, O dreamer! nay
With no dim thoughts astray
Darken this day of joy and clear delight;
Let happy tears and laughter fill it all,
And sunshine, till it find at evenfall
Splendour and consecration of the night.

Pass thou, my song, and die.
And if one ask thee, ere thy breath expire,
"What art thou?" then make answer: "Nothing I:
But God send every one their heart's desire."

THE GOLDEN BOOK OF CUPID AND PSYCHE.[1]

"ONCE in a city of old
Lived a king and a queen;
These had three fair daughters,
But the fairest of all was the third—"

How, in the ages of gold,
Where summer meadows were green,
By welling of pastoral waters
Did the story begin to be heard?

Surely the world was good,
And life and passion and speech
Still seemed to sparkle and quiver
In sunlit dew of the morn;

And the wood-nymphs danced through the wood,
And the sea-wind sang to the beach,
And the wise reeds talked in the river,
When this tale came to be born.

No! in an age like ours,
Dull, philanthropic, effete,

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1 One of five poems originally prefixed to Andrew Lang's edition of Adlington's *The Most Pleasant and Delectable Tale of the Marriage of Cupid and Psyche*, (London, 1887).

From the dust of a world grown stupid
And a language deep in decay,

Sudden, with scent as of flowers,
With song as of birds, the sweet
Story of Psyche and Cupid
Strangely sprang into day.

Seventeen centuries more
Have given their sands to the sum
Of kings and queens passed over
And cities of long ago;

But still to our ears as of yore
The musical soft words come,
Whose magic the earliest lover
Knew, and the last will know.

AN ETRUSCAN RING.

I.

WHERE, girt with orchard and with oliveyard,
The white hill-fortress glimmers on the hill,
Day after day an ancient goldsmith's skill
Guided the copper graver, tempered hard
By some lost secret, while he shaped the sard
Slowly to beauty, and his tiny drill,
Edged with corundum, ground its way until
The gem lay perfect for the ring to guard.

Then seeing the stone complete to his desire,
With mystic imagery carven thus,
And dark Egyptian symbols fabulous,
He drew through it the delicate golden wire,
And bent the fastening; and the Etrurian sun
Sank behind Ilva, and the work was done.

II.

What dark-haired daughter of a Lucumo
Bore on her slim white finger to the grave
This the first gift her Tyrrhene lover gave,
Those five-and-twenty centuries ago?
What shadowy dreams might haunt it, lying low
So long, while kings and armies, wave on wave,
Above the rock-tomb's buried architrave
Went million-footed trampling to and fro?

Who knows? but well it is so frail a thing,
Unharmed by conquering Time's supremacy,
Still should be fair, though scarce less old than Rome.
Now once again at rest from wandering
Across the high Alps and the dreadful sea,
In utmost England let it find a home.

THE SECRET OF THE EAST.

(VOPISC. *Aurelian*, c. 29.)

VARANES, when Aurelian's legionaries
Had stormed the sand-girt City of the Ṣun,
Sent him a crimson pall from Ctesiphon
Steeped in such unimaginable dyes
From Indian Sandyx-vats, that to men's eyes
Their triple Tyrian by comparison
Grew ashen-coloured, and all Rome was one
In eagerness to match so fair a prize.

Emperors sent, ships voyaged, lives were spilt
Far among waste and perilous lands; but all
Who came, came empty-handed: on the wall
Of the great temple that Domitian built
Blazed sole the scornful present of the King,
That splendour of strange Asian colouring.

"SISTER, what wouldst thou?" so the soul doth cry
Deep out of midnight to the broken heart,
Lying where she fell, whence she may not depart
Except one heal her. And in faint reply,
"Only to die," she wails, "only to die,
Only to die, if death might ease my smart;
O soul, I am not fashioned as thou art,
Dowered with thine awful immortality."

And the soul answers darkly: "Even thus.
Thou and thy bodily vesture shalt decay;
Pain's self through length of pain shall wear away,
And no new life shall come to quicken us;
Till one dread day in darker silence I
Shall know thee dead and know I cannot die."

FROM pastoral meads, from task of field and fold,
To war, to love, to death by land and sea
He turned, and sang in soft Parthenope
Heroic deeds, and peoples great of old,
Who dwelt where Nar and Amasenus rolled
By Sabine slope or Volscian low-country,
Mingling the dimly-shadowed days to be
With days long dead in his high verse of gold.

Yet ever sickening at loves ill allied,
Thwart fates, vext wanderings, waste of princely blood,
Harsh trumpet-notes and tossing fields of foam,
In twilight visions of the mystic wood
He sought, with longing eyes unsatisfied,
The immortality he gave to Rome.

ON THE DEATH OF ARNOLD TOYNBEE.

(10 MARCH, 1883.)

GOOD-BYE; no tears nor cries
Are fitting here, and long lament were vain.
Only the last low words be softly said,
And the last greeting given above the dead;
For soul more pure and beautiful our eyes
Never shall see again.

Alas! what help is it,
What consolation in this heavy chance,
That to the blameless life so soon laid low
This was the end appointed long ago,
This the allotted space, the measure fit
Of endless ordinance?

Thus were the ancient days
Made like our own monotonous with grief;
From unassuagèd lips even thus hath flown
Perpetually the immemorial moan
Of those that weeping went on desolate ways,
Nor found in tears relief.

For faces yet grow pale,
Tears rise at fortune, and true hearts take fire

In all who hear, with quickening pulse's stroke,
That cry that from the infinite people broke,
When third among them Helen led the wail
At Hector's funeral pyre.

And by the Latin beach
At rise of dawn such piteous tears were shed,
When Troy and Arcady in long array
Followed the princely body on its way,
And Lord Aeneas spoke the last sad speech
Above young Pallas dead.

Even in this English clime
The same sweet cry no circling seas can drown,
In melancholy cadence rose to swell
Some dirge of Lycidas or Astrophel
When lovely souls and pure before their time
Into the dusk went down.

These Earth, the bounteous nurse,
Hath long ago lapped in deep peace divine.
Lips that made musical their old-world woe
Themselves have gone to silence long ago,
And left a weaker voice and wearier verse,
O royal soul, for thine.

Beyond our life how far
Soars his new life through radiant orb and zone,

While we in impotency of the night
Walk dumbly, and the path is hard, and light
Fails, and for sun and moon the single star
Honour is left alone.

The star that knows no set,
But circles ever with a fixed desire,
Watching Orion's armour all of gold;
Watching and wearying not, till pale and cold
Dawn breaks, and the first shafts of morning fret
The east with lines of fire.

But on the broad low plain
When night is clear and windy, with hard frost,
Such as had once the morning in their eyes,
Watching and wearying, gaze upon the skies,
And cannot see that star for their great pain
Because the sun is lost.

Alas, how all our love
Is scant at best to fill so ample room!
Image and influence fall too fast away
And fading memory cries at dusk of day,
Deem'st thou the dust recks aught at all thereof,
The ghost within the tomb?

For even o'er lives like his
The slumberous river washes soft and slow;

The lapping water rises wearily,
Numbing the nerve and will to sleep; and we
Before the goal and crown of mysteries
Fall back, and dare not know.

Only at times we know,
In gyres convolved and luminous orbits whirled
The soul beyond her knowing seems to sweep
Out of the deep, fire-winged, into the deep;
As two, who loved each other here below
Better than all the world,

Yet ever held apart,
And never knew their own hearts' deepest things,
After long lapse of periods, wandering far
Beyond the pathways of the furthest star,
Into communicable space might dart
With tremor of thunderous wings;

Across the void might call
Each unto each past worlds that raced and ran,
And flash through galaxies, and clasp and kiss
In some slant chasm and infinite abyss
Far in the faint sidereal interval
Between the Lyre and Swan.

THE LIMIT OF LANDS.

THE east sea and the utmost sea
  Wash on long leagues of sand;
And past the sandhills silently
  Stretches a broad low land.

The limit of the world is set
  Here, and the end of all;
White sea-gull and white sail forget
  This way to flit or call.

One infinite bare arch of sky
  Stands flawless overhead;
The edges of Eternity
  Fold round, and Time lies dead.

W. Y. S.

1890.

WHERE nineteen summers' festal feet had gone,
  The darkness gathers round thee, laid alone;
And there, unchanged, unshadowed, lie with thee
Kindness and Truth and Magnanimity.

The Bibelot

It is certain that Mr. Wedmore was in the main well advised when he decided to reprint To Nancy *as that delicate little pastel in prose originally appeared in* The Savoy *for January, 1896. There is, however, a very beautiful Postscript to the so-called second part* — The Deterioration of Nancy — *in the next issue of the same magazine, which we cannot choose but recapture, closing as it does with a note of lyric tenderness quite unsurpassed elsewhere. And on that note, as it seems to us, we should take our leave of the youthful music-hall artiste.*

To Nancy, *then, is a finished study in the art of short-story telling, — the art of saying or of leaving things unsaid. It is all as light as air, done in aquatint in which color is suggested, not really laid on. As an illustration of Mr. Wedmore's theories concerning the short story it is well nigh perfect.*[1] *Consider its construction*

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[1] *Mr. Wedmore's imaginative work is as follows:*

1. Pastorals of France, *1877; second edition, 1878; third edition, with* Renunciations (*second edition,*) *1893; fourth edition,* ——.

carefully and say if you do not find the sublimation of art in these semi-crystallized sentiments of a middle-aged man almost but not quite in love. There is the pathos of the indeterminate, perhaps the indeterminable, in this opening of romantic vistas in the life of the Nancy Nanson to be—and then and there we bid her adieu.

Did she grow old? If she did Mr. Arthur Symons is the one living poet who has succeeded in making us realize what

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2. Renunciations, (*450 copies including those on large paper,*) *1893; second edition as above; third edition, (with portrait by J. J. Shannon, A. R. A.,)* ——.
3. English Episodes, *1894; second edition,* ——.
4. Orgeas and Miradou *with other Pieces. 1896. (The title story was also privately printed, limited to 25 copies. Crown 8vo, grey wrapper, n. d., [1896]. Reprinted in* The Bibelot, *Vol. V, pp. 131–150, (1899).*
5. The Collapse of the Penitent, *1900. Second edition,* ——.

Mr. Wedmore has also reprinted in separate format,

6. Orgeas and Miradou. *Crown 8vo, handmade paper, bds., 1905.* (*1s.* net.)
7. To Nancy, *in same* format, *1905.* (*1s.* net.)

Besides the above there exists much other valuable work including a Life of Balzac; Studies in English Art; Whistler's Etchings; Fine Prints; and a collection of essays and studies entitled On Books and Art, (1899).

such old, light women in time become. Mr. Wedmore with a saving reticence spares us this. Was it lack of courage or a finer art that made him do so? We do not think it difficult to answer. One prefers to recall Nancy and finally associate her slight little memory with those four exquisite lines chosen from Wordsworth:

> *He sang of love with quiet blending,*
> *Slow to begin, and never ending;*
> *Of serious faith, and inward glee.*
> *That was the song — the song for me!*

FOR JULY:
LECTURE ON THE
ENGLISH RENAISSANCE
BY OSCAR WILDE.

To Nancy

By

Frederick Wedmore.

TO NANCY.[1]

WEYMOUTH, *29th September.*

IT happens that I have seen much of you, Nancy, at an eventful moment — eventful for yourself I mean, in your life and your career — and here, because I like you, and like to think of and reflect on you, there is written down, straight and full, the record of my impression: concealing nothing, though written to yourself: a letter absolutely frank, looking all facts in the face; for, young though you are, you are intelligent enough to bear them. My letter you may find tedious, perhaps, but at all events unusual; for letters, even when detailed, generally omit much, hide some part of a thought — put the thing in a way that pleases the writer, or is intended to please the receiver. Here am I at the end of my first page, Nancy, and all preface! Well, I shall recall, to begin with, how it was that I met you.

Acquit me, please, of any general love of your over-praised Music Hall. Neither it

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1 A letter from Mr. Clement Ashton, the distinguished Painter, to Miss Nancy Nanson, of the Variety Theatres.

nor the Theatre counts for much in my life. I like you personally: I imagine a Future for you; but I am not anxious for "the status of the Profession." Life, it is just possible, has other goals than that of being received in smart drawing-rooms — whatever Art you practise, its practice is your reward. Society, my dear, has bestowed of late upon the stage "lover" an attention that is misplaced. We are getting near the end of it: and, at afternoon teas, the *cabotin*, in a frock coat, no longer dominates the situation. Youths from the play-house have, in the Past, over the luncheon-table, imparted to me, with patronage, their views about Painting: to me, Nancy, to your old friend, who has painted for thirty years — a full Academician one year since, with but few honours (as men call them) left to gain: few years, alas! in which to live to gain them. Child as you are, your common sense — that neatly-balanced little mind of yours, so unusually clear — that neatly-balanced mind assures you that it is not the profession you follow, but what you have been able to do in it, and what you really are, that gives you — I mean of course,

gives any one — legitimate claim to be in privileged places, to be motioned to the velvet of the social sward. "Artist," indeed! As well expect to be received with welcome for having had sufficient capital to buy a camp stool and a few feet of German moulding with which to frame a canvas sent to the Dudley Gallery, as to be suffered to dictate and to dogmatise in virtue of a well-worn coat and an appearance at a London theatre!

You have read so far, and yet I have not reminded you how it was that you and I came to know each other. It was just two years ago, in this Weymouth from which I write to you. I saw a photograph that struck me, at the door of your place of entertainment — at the door of the "People's Delight." The face was young — but I have known youth. Pretty, it was — but a fashionable portrait-painter lives with prettiness. It was so monstrously refined.

At three o'clock, they said, there would be an entertainment — Miss Nancy Nanson would certainly be seen. And in I went, with a companion — old Sir James Purchas, of Came Manor — my host more than once

in these parts. Sir James, you know, is not a prey to the exactions of conventionality, and there was no reason why the humble entertainment your lounge and shelter offered to the tripper should not afford us half an hour's amusement.

The blazing September afternoon you recollect — September with the glare of the dog days. The "people," it seemed, were not profiting that day by the "People's Delight," for the place was all but empty — everyone out of doors — and we wandered, not aimlessly indeed, but not successfully, among those cavernous, half-darkened regions, among the stalls for fruits and sweets and cheap jewelry, in search of a Show. A turn, and we came suddenly on rows of empty chairs placed in front of a small stage, with drawn curtains; and, at a money-taker's box (for reserved seats, as I supposed) — leaning over the money-taker's counter, in talk with someone who came, it may be, from a selling-stall — there was a child, a little girl. Sir James touched my arm, directing my attention to her, and I took the initiative — said to the little girl: "We came to see Miss Nancy Nanson. You

can tell us, perhaps, when is the Show going to begin?" "There won't be any entertainment this afternoon," the girl answered; "because, you see, there isn't any audience. I am Miss Nancy Nanson." The dignity of the child!

The fact was, you remember, that photograph at the entrance gave the impression of a girl of seventeen; and I did not at all connect it with the figure of the silver-voiced, well-spoken, elegant child, who proved to be yourself — since then my model and my youthful friend. But the moment you spoke, and when my eyes, still not quite used to the obscurity, took in your real face and those refined expressions, the identity was established, though the photograph, with its dexterous concealment, showed more the Nancy Nanson you were going to be, than the Nancy Nanson that you were. I was pleased, nevertheless; and we talked about yourself for a few minutes; and when you said (because I asked you) that there would be an entertainment next day, I told you we would come to see it, certainly. And Sir James was indulgent. And I am a man of my word.

And now there is a bit we can afford to hurry over; for the next stage of our acquaintance does not advance, appreciably, the action of your story. We came; we saw your entertainment: your three "turns;" singing, dancing: and pretty enough it was — but yet, so-so. You were such a pleasant child, of course we applauded you — so refined, yet singing, tolerably, such nonsense. Even then, it was your charming little personality, you know — it was not your performance that had in it attractiveness. Next day, I left the neighbourhood.

For two years after that, I never saw Miss Nancy Nanson, "vocalist and dancer;" only once heard of and read of you — only once, perhaps, thought of you. The once was last Christmas — your name, I saw, was advertised in a pantomime in London — played by "juveniles." I might, it is just possible, have gone to see it. But the average "juvenile!" — think! — and then, the influenza and the weather!

Well! this present glowing September, Nancy — glowing and golden as it was two years ago — brought me again, and very differently, into touch with you. The Past

is over. Now I fix your attention — for you are still patient with me — I fix your attention on the Present, and I point out to you, in detail — I realise to myself — how the time is critical, eventful; how you stand, Nancy, upon a certain brink. I am not going to prophesy what you may be; but I tell you what you are. The real You, you know: something better and deeper than that which those seven Pastels, any or all of them together, show you — my delighted notes of your external beauty; touched, I think, with some charm of grace that answers well to your own; and mimicking, not badly, the colours and contours of your stage presence. Nothing more. Chance gleams — an artist's "snap-shots" at Miss Nancy Nanson, vocalist and dancer, at sixteen. (Sixteen yesterday). But *you* — No!

This present September — a fortnight since — I came again to Weymouth; this time alone; puttting up at the old "Gloucester" (it was George the Third's house) from which I write to you; and not at Came Manor, in the neighbourhood. In the Weymouth of to-day one is obliged, in nearly every walk, to pass the "People's

Delight" — your cheap vulgarity, my dear, that the great Georgian time would have resented. I passed it soon, and the two names biggest upon the bills were, "Achilles, the Strong Man" — there are things in which even a decayed watering place cannot afford to be behind the fashion, and the "strong man" is in fashion to-day — "Achilles, the Strong Man," then, and "Miss Nancy Nanson." Again did I go in; took the seat, exactly, that I had taken two years since, in the third row of chairs; and while a band of three made casual, lifeless, introductory music, I waited for the Show.

The curtain rose presently on a great, living, breathing, over-energetic statue — a late Renaissance bronze, by John of Bologna, he seemed — that muscular piece of colour and firm form, that nigger, posed effectively, and of prodigious force. "John of Bologna" — but you never heard of him! Then he began his operations — Achilles, the Strong Man — holding, and only by his teeth, enormous weights; and rushing round with one, two, hundredweight, as if it were a feather; lifting, with that jaw of his, masses of iron; crashing them on the stage again, and

standing afterwards with quivering muscles, heaving chest. Applause — I joined in it myself, in common courtesy — and then the curtain fell.

A wait. The band struck up again — it was your first "turn." A slim and dainty figure, so very slight, so very young, in a lad's evening dress, advanced with swiftness towards the footlights, and bowed in a wide sweep that embraced everyone. Then you began to sing — and not too well, you know — a song of pretty-enough sentiment; the song of a stripling whose sweetheart was his mother. His mother, she sufficed for him. It suited your young years. A tender touch or two, and with a boy's manliness. Applause! You vanished.

You vanished to return. In a girl's dress this time, with movements now more swift and now more graceful. Another song, and, this time, dancing with it. It was dancing you were born for. "She has grown another being — and yet with the old pleasantness — in these two years," I thought. "A child no longer." In colour and agility you were a brilliant show. I have told you since, in talking, what I thought of you. You were

not a Sylvia Grey, my dear; still less that other Sylvia Voltaire praised, contrasting her with the Camargo. The Graces danced like Sylvia, Voltaire said — like the Camargo, the wild Nymphs. No! you were not Voltaire's Sylvia, any more than you were Sylvia Grey. Sylvia Grey's dance is perfect, from the waist upwards — as an observant actress pointed out to me, with whom I saw it. Swan-like in the holding, and slow movement, of the head and neck; exquisite in the undulations of the torso. Where Sylvia Grey ends — I mean where her remarkableness ends (for she has legs like another, I take it) — you, my dear, begin. Your modelling wants an Ingres to do it justice. The slimness of the girl, and what a fineness, as of race; and then, the agility of infinite practice, and sixteen young years!

A third "turn" — then it was that you were agile most of all. The flying feet went skyward. Black shoes rushed, rocket-like, so far above your head, and clattered on the floor again; whilst against the sober crimson of the background curtain — a dull, thin stuff, stretched straight — gleamed the white of moving skirts, and blazed the boss of

brightest scarlet that nestled somewhere in the brown gold of your head. Then, flushed and panting, it was over.

Next day, in a gaunt ante-room, or extra chamber, its wooden floor quite bare, and the place furnished only with a couple of benches and a half-voiceless semi-grand piano — the wreck of an Erard that was great once — in that big, bare room, Nancy, where my Pastels since have caught your pose, in lilac, rose and orange, but never your grave character, I came upon, and closely noted, and, for a quarter of an hour, talked to, a sedate young girl in black — a lady who, in all her bearing, ways, gesture, silver voice, was as refined as any, young or old, that I have been in contact with, in my long life — and I have lived abundantly amongst great ladies, from stately, restful Quakeress to the descendant of the "hundred Earls." No one is more refined than you. This thing may not last with you. Whether it lasts, depends, in great measure, upon the life you lead, in the strange world opening to you. Your little craft, Nancy, your slender skiff, will have some day to labour over voluminous seas.

You remember what you told me, in the great ante-room, standing by the wreck of the Erard, that your fingers touched. All your life to that time. You were frankness, absolutely; standing there in your dull, black frock, that became you to perfection; standing with hat of broad, black straw — the clear-cut nose, the faultless mouth, the bright-brown hair curled short about your head, and the limpid look of your serene eyes, steadily grey. It was interesting, and amusing too, your story. I told you, you remember, how much you had got on, how changed you were, what progress I had noticed. And you said a pretty "Thank you." It was clear that you meant it. We were friends. I asked who taught you — so far as anything *can* be taught, in this world, where, at bottom, one's work, one's progress, is one's own. You said, your mother. And I told you I'd seen your name in some London Christmas play-bill. "I had a big success," you said. What a theatrical moment! — the one occasion, in all my little dealings with you, in which I found the traditions of "the Profession" stronger with you than your own personal character.

Now, your own personal instinct is to be modest and natural; the traditions of "the Profession" are to boast. You did boast, Nancy! You had a big success, had you? Perhaps, for yourself; I do not say you failed. But the piece — my dear, you know it was a frost. Did it run three weeks? Come now! And someone, out of jealousy, paid four guineas — she or her friends did — to get you a bad notice somewhere in back-stairs journalism. And they got it, and then repented of it. You were friends with them afterwards. But what a world, Nancy! — a world in which, for four guineas, a scoundrel contributes his part towards damning your career!

You remember, before I asked if I might make some sketches of you, you were turning over a song that had been sent you by a "gentleman at Birmingham." He had had it "ruled" for you, and wanted you to buy it for three pounds. It was "rather a silly song," you thought. I settled myself quietly to master the sense, or, as was more probable, the nonsense, of it. My dear, it was blank rubbish! But you were not going to have it, you said. "Mamma would never

buy a song I didn't like and take to." That was well, I thought. And then you slowly closed the ruined Erard, and were going away. But on the road down-stairs, remember, I persuaded you to ask your mother that you might give me sittings. I told you who I was. And in the gaunt ante-room, lit well from above, I had a sitting next day. It was the first of several. And your mother trusted me, and trusted you, as you deserve to be trusted. And we worked hard together, didn't we?—you posing, and I drawing. And there are seven Pastels which record—*tant bien que mal*, my dear—the delightful outside of you, the side the public might itself see, if it had eyes to really see—the flash of you in the dance, snow-white or carmine; and I got all that with alacrity—"swift means" I took, to "radiant ends"—the poise of the slim figure, the white frock slashed with gold, the lifted foot, and that gleam of vivid scarlet in your hair, against the background of most sober crimson.

This tranquil Sunday I devote to writing to you, is the day after your last appearance at the "People's Delight." You and your

mother, very soon, you tell me, leave Weymouth and your old associations — it is your home, you know — and you leave it for ever. The country, you admit, is beautiful, but you are tired of the place. I don't much wonder. And you leave it — the great Bay, the noble chalk Downs, the peace of Dorset and its gleaming quiet — you leave it for lodgings in the Waterloo Road. For you must be amongst the agents for the Halls. Though you have been upon the Stage since you were very little, you have but lately, so you say, "put your heart into it." Well! it is not unnatural. But no more Sunday drives into the lovely country, recollect, with your brother, who is twenty-one and has his trade; and your uncle, who is in a good way of business here, you said — your uncle, the plumber.

And so, last night being your last night, Nancy, it was almost like a Benefit. As for your dancing, you meant, I knew, to give us the cup filled — yes, filled and running over. I had noticed that, on some earlier evening, when Little Lily Somebody — a dumpling child, light of foot, but with not one delightful "line" in all her meaningless, fat form —

when Lily Somebody had capered her infantile foolishness, to the satisfaction of those who rejoice in mere babyhood, someone presented her with a bouquet. And you danced excellently, just after her — you, height and grace, slimness and soul — and someone, with much effusion, handed you up a box of chocolates. And you smiled pleasantly. I saw there was a little conflict in your mind, however, between the gracious recognition of what was well-enough meant, and the resentment — well, the resentment we can hardly call it: the regret, at all events — at being treated so very visibly as a child — and yesterday you were to be sixteen! So I myself — who, if this small indignity had not been offered you, might conceivably have given you, in private, at all events, a basket of fine fruit — I meant to offer you flowers. It might have been fruit, I say, if smuggled into the ante-room where I had done my Pastels; for I had seen you once there, crunching, quite happily, imperfect apples between perfect teeth — your perfect teeth, almost the only perfect things, Nancy, in an imperfect world.

But it had to be flowers. So I sent round

to the dressing-room, just as you were getting ready, two "button-holes" merely — wired "button-holes" — of striped carnations, red or wine-coloured. They were not worn in your first turn. They were not worn in your second. In your third turn, I espied them at your neck's side, in the fury of your dance. Already there are people, I suppose, who would have thought those striped carnations happy — tossed, tossed to pieces, in the warmth of your throat.

Your second turn, last night, you know, was in flowing white, slashed with gold — old-gold velvet — with pale stockings. The third — when the flowers died happy in your riot — in pure white alone, with stockings black. You remember the foot held in your hand, as you swing round upon the other toe — and one uplifted leg seen horizontal, in its straight and modelled slimness.

My dear — what were my little flowers? Who could have known — when you had finished — the great things still to come? When the applause seemed over, and the enthusiasm of some subaltern from Dorchester was, as I take it, abated or suppressed — when the applause was over, a certain

elocutionist (Mr. Paris Brown, wasn't it?) brought you again upon the stage, and saying it was your last appearance, made you some presentation: a brooch from himself, "of no intrinsic value" he informed us — I willingly believed him — a bracelet from I don't know who — that *had* an "intrinsic value," I surmise — and a bouquet — exquisite! It was "From an admirer," Mr. Paris Brown, the elocutionist, read out, from an accompanying card. Then he congratulated you upon your Past; prophesied as to your Future; and, in regard to the presents to you, he said, in words that were quite happily chosen — because, Nancy, they were reticent while they were expressive — "She is but a — *girl*; and she has done her duty by the Management. Long may she be a credit to her father and mother!" Your mother I was well aware of — your mother I respect; and you, you love her. But your father — he was invented, I think, for the occasion, as an additional protection, should the designs upon you of the admirer from Dorchester prove to be not altogether such as they ought to be. The precaution was unnecessary; it was taking Time by the

forelock. Our young friend looked ingenuous, and smitten grievously — you seem so big upon the stage, Nancy — so grown up, I mean. I could, I think, have toned down his emotions, had I told him you were a bare sixteen.

Nancy, there is — for me — a certain pathos in this passage of yours from childhood into ripening girlhood; a book closed, as it were; a phase completed; and ending of the way. "What chapter is to open? Nancy Nanson — what phase or facet of her life," I ask myself, "is now so soon to be presented? What other way, what unfamiliar one, is to follow her blameless and dutiful childhood?" I had a restless night, Nancy. Thinking of this, one saw — ridiculously perhaps — a presage in the first bouquet, a threat in the first bracelet — in the admirer's card. Would she be like the rest? — at least, so many of them. Besmirched, too?

Remember, Nancy, I am no Puritan at all. I recognise Humanity's instincts. There is little I do not tolerate. I recognise the gulf that separates the accidentally impolitic from the essentially wrong. But we owe things to other people — to the World's

laws. We have responsibilities. *Noblesse oblige;* and all superiority is *Noblesse.* "She must *not* be like the rest," I said, last night, in broken dreams; "dining, winking, leering even, since sold at last and made common." In broken dreams, last night — or in wakeful hours — your feet tossed higher: your gay blood passed into the place — electrical, overpowering. You can be so grave and sweet, you know; and you can be so mad.

Have you ever lain awake, in the great, long darkness, and watched in the darkness a procession — the people of your Past and all your Future? But you have no Past. For myself, I have watched them. My mother, who is long gone; those who were good to me, and whom I slighted; the relations who failed me; the friend I lost. And the uncertain figures of the Future! But the line of the Future is short enough for me — for you, it is all yours. Last night, it seemed to me, the dark was peopled with your enemies; with your false friends, who were coming — always coming — the unavoidable crowd of the egotistic destroyers of youth. Their dark hearts, I thought, look upon her as a prey: some of them

cruel, some of them cynical, yet some of them only careless. And I wished that last night had not come — your sixteenth birthday — with the applause, and gifts, and menacing triumph.

There are women, perhaps, men cannot wrong — since they have wronged themselves too much. "This is a good girl," I said; and my over-anxious mind — in real affection for her — cries out to all the horrid forces of the world: "Leave Nancy!"

Nancy, when you read this, you smile — and naturally — at your most sombre friend. You think, of course, with all the reckless trust, courageous confidence, of girlhood, "So unnecessary!"

Go the straight way! . . . Whatever way you go, I shall always be your friend.

CLEMENT ASHTON.

Post-script. But I can't end like this. For when you want to be reproached the least, some of my sentences sound hard. Be hopeful! For, as it seems to me — the more I think of you — whatever happened, the quite irreparable has *not* happened. And, — if it had! Surely, surely, you can forget, for ever, one mad hour! And, from whatever point, you can begin "the journey homeward" — to yourself. You can be the real You again; the real Nancy — your very characteristic, the perfection of the contrast between the wildness of the theatre and your happy quietude.

You were a little fool the other day, were you not? And you were on deep waters. But I believe that you did *not* go under.

And so, dear Nancy — and in any case — it's at home I must think of you. With that golden wig, that adds — piquantly perhaps, and yet abominably — to your years, the maddening dancer is put off. The brown-haired child, in the plain dress, is in her place — the short brown hair, the quiet eyes, the tender, sensitive mouth. Your lodging-house parlour is ornamented with a play-bill, and photographs are stuck about

the mantelpiece — Miss Marie Dainton, is it? and your uncle, the plumber; and, again, a celebrity of the Halls; and somebody else, who was nice to you, a year ago, at Weymouth; some comrade you were fond of: "She's a dear girl," you said. In the lodging-house parlour, your mother sits beside the fireplace, combing out the golden wig, after its last night's service. The kettle, in preparation for tea-time, not far off, is at the side of the fire. It begins to sing. You, Nancy, sit beyond the table, on a cane-bottomed chair; with your knees crossed — as I saw you, that first time I called on you in London. Your hands, so young, so nervous, and so highly bred, smooth out upon your lap a bit of wool-work, that you — whose instinct is to please and to be pleasant — are doing for your landlady. And, in the glow of the fender, lies curled up, warm and sleeping, that grey kitten rescued from misery, four days before, by you: won to you by your magnetism, or your kindness — they are both the same. In the morning, when your mother leaves your bed — leaves the tired child, worn out by the theatre, to an hour's extra resting — the soft grey thing,

that you bewitched and cared for, creeps to your side — is happy.

Did they ever teach you, at your school, I wonder, verses of Wordsworth on the stock-dove? What did the stock-dove sing?

> He sang of love with quiet blending,
> Slow to begin, and never ending;
> Of serious faith, and inward glee.
> That was the song — the song for me!

Nancy! — the spirit of the stock-dove's song lies in the deepest heart of Nancy Nanson.

C. A.

The Bibelot

I.

WHEN *Oscar Wilde,—poet, apostle of Beauty, and æsthete in general,—reached New York in January, 1882, his first lecture was delivered before an audience that might well have turned the head of a greater man than himself. As a matter of fact it did nothing of the sort.*[1] *Would you know how the youthful genius of that day appeared to minds capable of forming rational opinions and undeterred by the fine fury which* Punch *had so sedulously worked up against him and his followers in England?*

"It is seldom that Chickering Hall has contained so fine an audience as that which gathered there last evening to see Mr. Oscar Wilde, and to listen to his exposition of those peculiar views which have distinguished him from everyday folk in England. And Mr. Wilde was well worth seeing, his short

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1 *See* The Æsthetic Movement in England. By Walter Hamilton, *London, 1882. (Octavo. Pp. viii+128.) The chapter devoted to Wilde, (pp. 85-110,) is an impartial account by a contemporary, written during the poet's stay in America, distinguished alike for its appreciation and all round good sense.*

breeches and silk stockings showing to even better advantage upon the stage than in the gilded drawing-rooms, where the young apostle has heretofore been seen in New York. No sunflower, nor yet a lily, dangled from the button-hole of his coat; indeed, there is room for reasonable doubt as to whether his coat had even one button-hole to be put to such artistic use. 'But judging his coat by the laws of the Philistines, it was a well-fitting coat, and looked as though it had been made for the wearer as a real coat, and not as a mere piece of decorative drapery."

From the same excellent précis *which the* New York World *proceeded to give no better introduction to the Lecture could be desired even after the lapse of twenty-three years:*

"A subject as evasive as beauty, for beauty was the real subject of the lecture, is difficult to grasp with logic. Not analysis, not descriptive was the method of treatment, but revelation. 'Beauty cannot be taught, but only revealed,' is the apothegm that Mr. Wilde never tires of repeating; and this, fitly enough, is the key to his style. He handled no prosaic subject, nor was his handling prosaic. Long melodious sentences, seldom involved, always clear, unfolded his meaning, as graceful curves reveal a beautiful figure. A vocabulary as wide as Swinburne's and well-nigh as musical, modelled on that rich and flowing prose, which is as marvellous as Swinburne's verse—how could such a style be dull? Yet it never was obscure. Always the first clear principle of chaste English, simplicity, and the careful attribute of clean thought, exactness, characterised his style. Almost gorgeous at times, his language never quite ran away with him, but was

always equal to the clear expression of the most subtle fancy. The best parts of the lecture were its clear glimpses of a rare appreciation of artistic literary work from Homer to William Morris. It is not every day that one can sit in the hearing of so keen a critic, or catch such glimpses of so clear a revelation of art. Perhaps the young poet may yet lack strength, but he certainly does not lack fluency, width, and felicity of style."

Unfortunately the only existing versions of the discourse are far from satisfactory. That Wilde ever read the proofs or in any way consented to publication in The Seaside Library, *(under date of January 19, 1882,) would seem improbable. The lecture next appears in the "privately printed" Paris edition of 1903: an ignoble piracy with deliciously absurd substitutions as e.g. "the beautiful Lady Euphonia" for "the beautiful boy Euphorion." But when all is said, even an imperfect and garbled version is better than none and, subject to the deductions mentioned, we believe our readers will agree with us.*

II.

Concerning the Introduction, (or "L'Envoi" as its author chose to call it,) prefixed to Rose Leaf and Apple Leaf, — *that rare little book of verses which is one of the choicest specimens of applied æsthetics in bookmaking extant, — it has an atmosphere*

of distinction transfusing the later Intentions, *and should never be confounded with the book entitled* Essays, Criticisms and Reviews, *an absolutely inadequate specimen of Wilde's prose at its matured best.*

The circumstances connected with the publication of Rose Leaf and Apple Leaf *we confess we are unable to give. One would like to believe that the author of the poems never wholly ignored the kindly offices of him who afterwards fell into such desperate extremes. It is true an unpleasant rumor exists to the contrary. But what matters it? The thing we care for now is just this brief, brilliant essay; as for the verses, well and good they are despite benefits forgot. Friends or unfriends the exquisite little* causerie *remains safe and secure,—treasure-trove of unsullied gold against the years that the locust hath eaten.*

FOR AUGUST:

POEMS IN VERSE AND PROSE
BY ERNEST DOWSON.

Lecture on the English Renaissance

Rose Leaf and Apple Leaf: L'Envoi

By

Oscar Wilde.

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LECTURE ON THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE.

AMONG the many debts which we owe to the supreme æsthetic faculty of Goethe is that he was the first to teach us to define beauty in terms the most concrete possible, to realise it, I mean, always in its special manifestations. So, in the lecture which I have the honour to deliver before you, I will not try to give you any abstract definition of beauty, any such universal formula for it as was sought for by the philosophy of the eighteenth century; still less to communicate to you that which in its essence is incommunicable, the virtue by which a particular picture or poem affects us with a unique or special joy; but rather to point out to you the general ideas which characterise the great English renaissance of art in this century.

The English renaissance has been described as a mere revival of the Greek modes of thought, and again as a mere revival of mediæval feeling; rather, I would say, that to these forms of the human spirit it has added whatever artistic value the intricacy and complexity and experience of

modern life can give. It is from the union of Hellenism in its breadth, its sanity of purpose, its calm possession of beauty, with the adventive, the intensified individualism, the passionate colour of the romantic spirit, that springs out of the nineteenth century in England, as from the marriage of Faust and Helen of Troy sprang the beautiful boy Euphorion. In the womb of the French revolution, and in the storm and terror of that wild time, tendencies were hidden away that the artistic renaissance bent to her own service when the time came. And that desire for perfection which lay at the base of the revolution found in a young English poet its most complete and flawless realisation. Phidias and the achievements in Greek art are foreshadowed in Homer. Dante prefigures for us the passion and colour and intensity of Italian painting. The modern love of landscape dates from Rousseau, and it is in Keats that one discerns the beginning of the artistic renaissance of England. He was the forerunner of the pre-Raphaelite school, and so of the great romantic wave of which I will speak. Speaking of the pre-Raphaelites, what are they? If you ask

nine-tenths of the British public, what is the meaning of the word æsthetic, they will tell you that it is the French for affectation or the German for a dado. If you inquire about the pre-Raphaelites, you will hear something about an eccentric lot of young men to whom belong a sort of divine crookedness and holy awkwardness in drawing all the chief objects of art. To know nothing about their great men is one of the necessary elements of English education.

THE ORIGIN OF THE ART REVOLUTION.

In 1847 a number of young men in London, all admirers of Keats, were in the habit of meeting together and discussing art. They had determined to revolutionise poetry and painting. To do so was to lose, in England, all their rights as citizens. They had those things which the English public never forgives — youth, power and enthusiasm. Satire paid the usual homage which mediocrity yields to genius, blinding the British public to what is noble and beautiful, but harming the artist not at all. To disagree with three-fourths of England on all points is one of the first elements of sanity,

which is a deep source of consolation in all moments of spiritual doubt.

These young men called themselves Pre-Raphaelites because, as opposed to the facile abstractions of Raphael they thought they had found a stronger realism of imagination, a more careful realism of technique, an individuality more intense. But of all things was it a return to Nature. Later on, there came to the old house by Blackfriars Bridge Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, who added a more exquisite spirit of choice, a more faultless devotion to beauty, and more intense seeking for perfection. Morris felt that the close imitation of Nature was a disturbing element in imaginative art. To him we owe poetry the perfect precision of which, and the clearness of word and vision, have not been excelled in the literature of our country.

Great eras in the history of arts have been eras not only of increased feeling, but also of new technical improvements. The revolution in modern music has been due to the invention of new instruments entirely. The artist may trace the depressed revolution of Bunthorne simply to the lack of technical

means. So it has been with this romantic movement of ours. The painting of Burne-Jones shows a far more intricate wonder of design and splendour of colour than English imaginative art had ever shown before. The poetry of Morris, Rossetti and Swinburne shows a sustaining consciousness of the musical value of each word which Théophile Gautier's advice to the young poet, to read his dictionary every day as being the only book worth a poet's reading, admirably expresses. And yet, what people call the poet's inspiration has not lost its wings; but we have accustomed ourselves to count their innumerable pulsations, to estimate their limitless strength, and to govern their ungovernable freedom.

THE CHOICE OF SUBJECTS.

And now I would point out to you the operation of the artistic spirit in the choice of subject. Like the philosopher of the platonic vision, the poet is the spectator of all time and all existence. For him no form is obsolete, no subject out of date; rather, whatever of life and passion the world has known in the desert of Judea or in Arcadian

valley, by the ruins of Troy or Damascus, in the crowded and hideous streets of the modern city, or by the pleasant ways of Camelot, all lies before him like an open scroll, all is still instinct with beautiful life. He will take of it what is salutary for his own spirit, choosing some facts and rejecting others, with a calm artistic control of one who is in possession of the secret of beauty. It is to no avail that the muse of poetry be called even by such a clarion note as Whitman's to migrate from Greece and Ionia and to placard "removed" and "to let" on the rocks of the snowy Parnassus. For art, to quote a noble passage of Mr. Swinburne's, is very life itself and knows nothing of death. And so it comes that he who seems to stand most remote from his age is he who mirrors it best, because he has stripped life of that mist of familiarity which, as Shelley used to say, makes life obscure to us.

Whatever spiritual message an artist brings to his age, it is for us to do naught but accept his teaching. You have most of you seen probably that great masterpiece of Rubens which hangs in the gallery of

Brussels, that swift and wonderful pageant of horse and rider, arrested in its most exquisite and fiery moment, when the winds are caught in crimson banner and the air is lit by the gleam of armour and the flash of plume. Well, that is joy in art, though that golden hillside be trodden by the wounded feet of Christ; and it is for the death of the Son of Man that that gorgeous cavalcade is passing.

CHANNELS THROUGH WHICH THE SOUL IS TOUCHED.

In its primary aspect a painting has no more spiritual message than an exquisite fragment of Venetian glass. The channels by which all noble and imaginative work in painting should touch the soul are not those of the truths of lives. This should be done by a certain inventive and creative handling entirely independent of anything definitely poetical in the subject, something entirely satisfying in itself, which is, as the Greeks would say, in itself an end. So the joy of poetry comes never from the subject, but from an inventive handling of rhythmical language.

THE PLACE OF CRITICISM.

What place has criticism in our culture? I think that the first duty of an art critic is to hold his tongue at all times and upon all subjects. You have listened to "Patience" for a hundred nights, and you have only heard me for one. It will make, no doubt, that satire more piquant by knowing something about the subject of it. But you must not judge of æstheticism by the satire of Mr. Gilbert, any more than you judge of the strength and splendour of sun or sea by the dust that dances in the beam or the bubble that breaks on the wave. Don't take your critic as any sure test of art. For artists, like the Greek gods, are only revealed to one another. As Emerson says somewhere, their real value and place time only can show. The true critic addresses not the artist ever, but the public. His work lies with them. Art can never have any other aim but her own perfection. I have no reverence, said Keats, for the public, or for anything in existence but the Eternal Being, the memory of great men, and the principle of beauty.

Such, then, is the spirit which I believe to be guiding and underlying our English renaissance, a renaissance many-sided and wonderful, promotive of strong ambitions and lofty personalities; yet for all its splendid achievements in poetry and the decorative arts, and in painting, for all the increased comeliness and grace of dress and of furniture of houses, not complete. For there can be no great sculpture without a beautiful national life, and the commercial spirit of England has killed that; no great drama without a noble national life, and the commercial spirit of England has killed that too.

THE NOVEL AND THE DRAMA.

The novel has not killed the play, as some critics would persuade us. The romantic period of France shows that the work of Balzac and of Hugo grew up side by side together — nay more, were complementary to each other, although neither of them saw it. The drama is the meeting place of art and life; it deals, as Mazzini said, not merely with man, but with social man, with man in relation to God and to humanity. It is the product of a period of great, national, united

energy. It is impossible without a noble public, and it belongs to such ages as the age of Elizabeth, at London, Pericles, at Athens. It is part of such lofty moral and spiritual ardour as came to Greece after the defeat of the Persian fleet, and to Englishmen after the wreck of the Armada of Spain.

Shelley felt how incomplete our movement was in this respect, and has shown in one great tragedy by what terror and pity he would have pacified our age; but in spite of the "Cenci," the drama is one of the artistic forms through which the genius of England seeks in vain an outlet and an expression.

AMERICA TO COMPLETE THE MOVEMENT.

It is rather, perhaps, to you that we would turn to complete and perfect this great movement of ours, for there is something Hellenic in your air and world, something that has a quicker breath of the joy and power of Elizabeth's England about it than our ancient civilisation can give us. For you, at least, are young; no hungry generations tread you down, and the past does not mock you with the ruins of a beauty, the

secret of whose creation you have lost. That very absence of tradition which Ruskin thought would rob your rivers of their laughter and your flowers of their light may be rather the source of your freedom and strength. To speak in literature with the perfect rectitude of the movement of animals, and the unimpeachableness of the sentiments of trees and the grass by the roadside, has been defined by one of your poets as the flawless triumph of art; it is a triumph which you above all other nations may be destined to achieve. For the voices that have their dwelling in sea and mountain are not the chosen music of liberty only. Other messages are there, if you will but listen to them — may yield you the splendour of some new imagination, the marvel of some new liberty.

If, then, this is so, and the materials for a civilisation lie all around you, what profit, you will ask me, will all this study of our poets and painters bring you? I might answer that the intellect can be engaged without a direct, didactic object, on an artistic and historical problem — that the demand of the intellect is merely to feel itself alive.

I think such a study will bring you something that is the knowledge of real strength in art, not that you should imitate the works of great men, but their artistic spirit.

WHERE MORALITY IS NOT IN QUESTION.

In nations, as in individuals, if the passion for creation be not accompanied by the critical, the æsthetic faculty also, it will be sure to waste its strength. It is not an increased moral sense or moral supervision that your literature needs. Indeed one should never talk of a moral or immoral poem. Poems are either well written or badly written; that is all. Any element of morals or implied reference to a standard of good and evil in art is often a sign of a certain incompleteness of vision. All good work aims at a purely artistic effect. But as in your cities so in your literature, it is an increased sensibility to beauty that is lacking. All noble work is not national merely, but universal. Spiritual freedom your own generous lives and liberal air will give you. From us you will learn the classical restraint of form. Love art for its own sake and then all things that you need will be added

to you. This devotion to beauty, and to the creation of beautiful things, is the test of all great civilisations; it is what makes the life of each citizen a sacrament and not a speculation. For beauty is the only thing that time cannot harm. Philosophies fall away like sand, creeds follow one another, but what is beautiful is a joy for all seasons, a possession for all eternity.

Wars there must be always; but I think that creating a common intellectual atmosphere might make men brothers. National hatreds are always strongest where culture is lowest. Great empires there must be as long as personal ambition and the spirit of the age are one; but art is the only empire which a nation's enemies cannot take from her. We in our renaissance are seeking to create a sovereignty that will still be England's, when her yellow leopards have grown weary of wars, and the rose on her shield is crimsoned no more with the blood of battle.

And you, too, absorbing into the heart of a great people, this pervading artistic spirit will create for yourselves such riches as you have never yet created, though your land be

a network of railways, and your cities the harbours of the galleys of the world.

THE REASON OF DECORATIVE ART.

I know indeed that the divine prescience of beauty is not our inheritance. For such an informing and presiding spirit of art to shield us from all harsh and alien influences, we of the Teutonic and Saxon races must turn rather to that strained self-consciousness of the age which is the keynote of all our romantic art, and must be the source of all or nearly all our culture. I mean that intellectual curiosity of the nineteenth century which is always looking for the secret of the life that still lingers around old and bygone forms of culture. The truths of art cannot be taught. They are revealed only — revealed to natures which have made themselves receptive of all beautiful impressions by the study of and the worship of all beautiful things. Hence the enormous importance given to the decorative arts in our English renaissance; hence all that marvel of design that comes from the hand of Edward Burne-Jones; hence all that weaving of tapestry, the staining of glass,

and the beautiful working in clay and metal and wood.

THE SUNFLOWER AND THE LILY.

You have heard, I think, a few of you, of two flowers connected with the æsthetic movement in England said (I assure you erroneously) to be the food of some æsthetic young men. Well, let me tell you that the reason we love the lily and the sunflower, in spite of what Mr. Gilbert may tell you, is not for any vegetable fashion at all; it is because these two lovely flowers are in England the two most perfect models of design, the most naturally adapted for decorative art — the gaudy leonine beauty of the one and the precious loveliness of the other giving to the artist the most entire and perfect joy. And so with you: let there be no flower in your meadows that does not wreathe its tendrils around your pillars, no little leaf in your Titan forests that does not lend its form to design, no curving spray of wild rose or briar that does not live forever in carven arch or window of marble, no bird in your air that is not giving the iridescent wonder of its colour the exquisite curves of

its wings in flight, to make more precious the preciousness of simple adornment; for the voices that have their dwelling in sea and mountain are not the chosen music of liberty only. Other messages are there in the wonder of wind-swept heights and the majesty of silent deep — messages that, if you will listen to them, will give you the wonder of all new imagination, the treasure of all new beauty. We spend our days, each one of us, in looking for the secret of life. Well, the secret of life is in art.

ROSE LEAF AND APPLE LEAF: L'ENVOI.

AMONGST the many young men in England who are seeking along with me to continue and to perfect the English renaissance — *jeunes guerriers du drapeau romantique*, as Gautier would have called us — there is none whose love of art is more flawless and fervent, whose artistic sense of beauty is more subtle and more delicate — none, indeed, who is dearer to myself — than the young poet whose verses I have brought with me to America; verses full of sweet sadness, and yet full of joy; for the most joyous poet is not he who sows the desolate highways of this world with the barren seed of laughter, but he who makes his sorrow most musical, this indeed being the meaning of joy in art — that incommunicable element of artistic delight which, in poetry, for instance, comes from what Keats called the "sensuous life of verse," the element of song in the singing, made so pleasurable to us by that wonder of motion which often has its origin in mere musical impulse, and in painting is to be sought for, from the subject never, but from the pictorial charm

only — the scheme and symphony of the colour, the satisfying beauty of the design: so that the ultimate expression of our artistic movement in painting has been, not in the spiritual visions of the pre-Raphaelites, for all their marvel of Greek legend and their mystery of Italian song, but in the work of such men as Whistler and Albert Moore, who have raised design and colour to the ideal level of poetry and music. For the quality of their exquisite painting comes from the mere inventive and creative handling of line and colour, from a certain form and choice of beautiful workmanship, which, rejecting all literary reminiscence and all metaphysical idea, is in itself entirely satisfying to the æsthetic sense — is, as the Greeks would say, an end in itself; the effect of their work being like the effect given to us by music; for music is the art in which form and matter are always one — the art whose subject cannot be separated from the method of its expression; the art which most completely realises for us the artistic ideal, and is the condition to which all the other arts are constantly aspiring.

Now, this increased sense of the abso-

lutely satisfying value of beautiful workmanship, this recognition of the primary importance of the sensuous element in art, this love of art for art's sake, is the point in which we of the younger school have made a departure from the teaching of Mr. Ruskin, — a departure definite and different and decisive.

Master indeed of the knowledge of all noble living and of the wisdom of all spiritual things will he be to us ever, seeing that it was he who by the magic of his presence and the music of his lips taught us at Oxford that enthusiasm for beauty which is the secret of Hellenism, and that desire for creation which is the secret of life, and filled some of us, at least, with the lofty and passionate ambition to go forth into far and fair lands with some message for the nations and some mission for the world, and yet in his art criticism, his estimate of the joyous element of art, his whole method of approaching art, we are no longer with him; for the keystone to his æsthetic system is ethical always. He would judge of a picture by the amount of noble moral ideas it expresses; but to us the channels by which

all noble work in painting can touch, and does touch, the soul are not those of truths of life or metaphysical truths. To him perfection of workmanship seems but the symbol of pride, and incompleteness of technical resource the image of an imagination too limitless to find within the limits of form its complete expression, or of a love too simple not to stammer in its tale. But to us the rule of art is not the rule of morals. In an ethical system, indeed, of any gentle mercy good intentions will, one is fain to fancy, have their recognition; but of those that would enter the serene House of Beauty the question that we ask is not what they had ever meant to do, but what they have done. Their pathetic intentions are of no value to us, but their realised creations only. *Pour moi je préfere les poëtes qui font des vers, les médecins qui sachent guérir, les peintres qui sachent peindre.*

Nor, in looking at a work of art, should we be dreaming of what it symbolises, but rather loving it for what it is. Indeed, the transcendental spirit is alien to the spirit of art. The metaphysical mind of Asia may create for itself the monstrous and many-

breasted idol, but to the Greek, pure artist, that work is most instinct with spiritual life which conforms most closely to the perfect facts of physical life also. Nor, in its primary aspect, has a painting, for instance, any more spiritual message or meaning for us than a blue tile from the wall of Damascus, or a Hitzen vase. It is a beautifully-coloured surface, nothing more, and affects us by no suggestion stolen from philosophy, no pathos pilfered from literature, no feeling filched from a poet, but by its own incommunicable artistic essence — by that selection of truth which we call style, and that relation of values which is the draughtsmanship of painting, by the whole quality of the workmanship, the arabesque of the design, the splendour of the colour, for these things are enough to stir the most divine and remote of the chords which make music in our soul, and colour, indeed, is of itself a mystical presence on things, and tone a kind of sentiment.

This, then — the new departure of our younger school — is the chief characteristic of Mr. Rennell Rodd's poetry; for, while there is much in his work that may interest

the intellect, much that will excite the emotions, and many cadenced chords of sweet and simple sentiment — for to those who love Art for its own sake all other things are added — yet the effect which they preëminently seek to produce is purely an artistic one. Such a poem as "The Sea-King's Grave," with all its majesty of melody as sonorous and as strong as the sea by whose pine-fringed shores it was thus nobly conceived and nobly fashioned; or the little poem that follows it, whose cunning workmanship, wrought with such an artistic sense of limitation, one might liken to the rare chasing of the mirror that is its motive; or "In a Church," pale flower of one of those exquisite moments when all things except the moment itself seem so curiously real, and when the old memories of forgotten days are touched and made tender, and the familiar place grows fervent and solemn suddenly with a vision of the undying beauty of the gods that died; or the scene in "Chartres Cathedral," sombre silence brooding on vault and arch, silent people kneeling on the dust of the desolate pavement as the young priest lifts Lord Christ's body in a

crystal star, and then the sudden beams of scarlet light that break through the blazoned window and smite on the carven screen, and sudden organ peals of mighty music rolling and echoing from choir to canopy, and from spire to shaft, and over all the clear glad voice of a singing boy, affecting one as a thing oversweet, and striking just the right artistic keynote for one's emotions; or "At Lanuvium," through the music of whose lines one seems to hear again the murmur of the Mantuan bees straying down from their own green valleys and inland streams to find what honeyed amber the sea-flowers might be hiding; or the poem written "In the Coliseum," which gives one the same artistic joy that one gets watching a handicraftsman at his work, a goldsmith hammering out his gold into those thin plates as delicate as the petals of a yellow rose, or drawing it out into the long wires like tangled sunbeams, so perfect and precious is the mere handling of it; or the little lyric interludes that break in here and there like the singing of a thrush, and are as swift and as sure as the beating of a bird's wing, as light and bright as the apple-

blossoms that flutter fitfully down to the orchard grass after a spring shower, and look the lovelier for the rain's tears lying on their dainty veinings of pink and pearl; or the sonnets — for Mr. Rodd is one of those *qui sonnent le sonnet*, as the Ronsardists used to say — that one called "On the Border Hills," with its fiery wonder of imagination and the strange beauty of its eighth line; or the one which tells of the sorrow of the great king for the little dead child, — well, all these poems aim, as I said, at producing a purely artistic effect, and have the rare and exquisite quality that belongs to work of that kind; and I feel that the entire subordination in our æsthetic movement of all merely emotional and intellectual motives to the vital informing poetic principle is the surest sign of our strength.

But it is not enough that a work of art should conform to the æsthetic demands of the age: there should be also about it, if it is to give us any permanent delight, the impress of a distinct individuality. Whatever work we have in the nineteenth century must rest on the two poles of personality and perfection. And so in this little volume,

by separating the earlier and more simple work from the work that is later and stronger and possesses increased technical power and more artistic vision, one might weave these disconnected poems, these stray and scattered threads, into one fiery-coloured strand of life, noting first a boy's mere gladness of being young, with all its simple joy in field and flower, in sunlight and in song, and then the bitterness of sudden sorrow at the ending by Death of one of the brief and beautiful friendships of one's youth, with all those unanswered longings and questionings unsatisfied by which we vex, so uselessly, the marble face of death; the artistic contrast between the discontented incompleteness of the spirit and the complete perfection of the style that expresses it forming the chief element of the æsthetic charm of these particular poems; — and then the birth of Love, and all the wonder and the fear and the perilous delight of one on whose boyish brows the little wings of love have beaten for the first time; and the love-songs, so dainty and delicate, little swallow-flights of music, and full of such fragrance and freedom that they might all

be sung in the open air and across moving water; and then autumn, coming with its quireless woods and odorous decay and ruined loveliness, Love lying dead; and the sense of the mere pity of it.

One might stop there, for from a young poet one should ask for no deeper chords of life than those that love and friendship make eternal for us; and the best poems in this volume belong clearly to a later time, a time when these real experiences become absorbed and gathered up into a form which seems from such real experiences to be the most alien and the most remote; when the simple expression of joy or sorrow suffices no longer, and lives rather in the stateliness of the cadenced metre, in the music and colour of the linked words, than in any direct utterance; lives, one might say, in the perfection of the form more than in the pathos of the feeling. And yet, after the broken music of love and the burial of love in the autumn woods, we can trace that wandering among strange people, and in lands unknown to us, by which we try so pathetically to heal the hurts of the life we know, and that pure and passionate devo-

tion to Art which one gets when the harsh reality of life has too suddenly wounded one, and is with discontent or sorrow marring one's youth, just as often, I think, as one gets it from any natural joy of living; and that curious intensity of vision by which, in moments of overmastering sadness and despair ungovernable, artistic things will live in one's memory with a vivid realism caught from the life which they help one to forget — an old gray tomb in Flanders with a strange legend on it, making one think how, perhaps, passion does live on after death, a necklace of blue and amber beads and a broken mirror found in a girl's grave at Rome, a marble image of a boy habited like Erôs, and with the pathetic tradition of a great king's sorrow lingering about it like a purple shadow, — over all these the tired spirit broods with that calm and certain joy that one gets when one has found something that the ages never dull and the world cannot harm; and with it comes that desire of Greek things which is often an artistic method of expressing one's desire for perfection; and that longing for the old dead days which is so modern, so

incomplete, so touching, being, in a way, the inverted torch of Hope, which burns the hand it should guide; and for many things a little sadness, and for all things a great love; and lastly, in the pine-wood by the sea, once more the quick and vital pulse of joyous youth leaping and laughing in every line, the frank and fearless freedom of wave and wind waking into fire life's burnt-out ashes and into song the silent lips of pain, — how clearly one seems to see it all, the long colonnade of pines with sea and sky peeping in here and there like a flitting of silver; the open place in the green deep heart of the wood with the little moss-grown altar to the old Italian god in it; and the flowers all about, cyclamen in the shadowy places, and the stars of the white narcissus lying like snowflakes over the grass, where the quick, bright-eyed lizard starts by the stone, and the snake lies coiled lazily in the sun on the hot sand, and overhead the gossamer floats from the branches like thin tremulous threads of gold, — the scene is so perfect for its motive, for surely here, if anywhere, the real gladness of life might be revealed to one's youth — the gladness that

comes, not from the rejection, but from the absorbtion, of all passion, and is like that serene calm that dwells in the faces of the Greek statues, and which despair and sorrow cannot disturb, but intensify only.

In some such way as this we could gather up these strewn and scattered petals of song into one perfect rose of life, and yet, perhaps, in so doing, we might be missing the true quality of the poems; one's real life is so often the life that one does not lead; and beautiful poems, like threads of beautiful silks, may be woven into many patterns and to suit many designs, all wonderful and all different: and romantic poetry, too, is essentially the poetry of impressions, being like that latest school of painting, the school of Whistler and Albert Moore, in its choice of situation as opposed to subject; in its dealing with the exceptions rather than with the types of life; in its brief intensity; in what one might call its fiery-coloured momentariness, it being indeed the momentary situations of life, the momentary aspects of nature, which poetry and painting now seek to render for us. Sincerity and constancy will the artist, indeed, have always; but

sincerity in art is merely that plastic perfection of execution without which a poem or a painting, however noble its sentiment or human its origin, is but wasted and unreal work, and the constancy of the artist cannot be to any definite rule or system of living, but to that principle of beauty only through which the inconstant shadows of his life are in their most fleeting moment arrested and made permanent. He will not, for instance, in intellectual matters, acquiesce in that facile orthodoxy of our day which is so reasonable and so artistically uninteresting, nor yet will he desire that fiery faith of the antique time which, while it intensified, yet limited, the vision, still less will he allow the calm of his culture to be marred by the discordant despair of doubt or the sadness of a sterile skepticism; for the Valley Perilous, where ignorant armies clash by night, is no resting-place meet for her to whom the gods have assigned the clear upland, the serene height, and the sunlit air, — rather will he be always curiously testing new forms of belief, tinging his nature with the sentiment that still lingers about some beautiful creeds, and searching

for experience itself, and not for the fruits of experience, when he has got its secret, he will leave without regret much that was once very precious to him. "I am always insincere," says Emerson somewhere, "as knowing that there are other moods:" "*Les émotions*," wrote Théophile Gautier once in a review of Arsène Houssaye, "*Les émotions ne se ressemblent pas, mais être ému — voilà l'important.*"

Now, this is the secret of the art of the modern romantic school, and gives one the right keynote for its apprehension; but the real quality of all work which, like Mr. Rodd's, aims, as I said, at a purely artistic effect, cannot be described in terms of intellectual criticism; it is too intangible for that. One can perhaps convey it best in terms of the other arts, and by reference to them; and, indeed, some of these poems are as iridescent and as exquisite as a lovely fragment of Venetian glass; others as delicate in perfect workmanship and as simple in natural motive as an etching by Whistler is, or one of those beautiful little Greek figures which in the olive woods round Tanagra men can still find, with the faint gild-

ing and the fading crimson not yet fled from hair and lips and raiment; and many of them seem like one of Corot's twilights just passing into music, for not merely in visible colour, but in sentiment also — which is the colour of poetry — may there be a kind of tone.

But I think that the best likeness to the quality of this young poet's work I ever saw was in the landscape by the Loire. We were staying once, he and I, at Amboise, that little village with its gray-slate roofs and steep streets and gaunt grim gateway, where the quiet cottages nestle like white pigeons into the sombre clefts of the great bastioned rock, and the stately renaissance houses stand silent and apart — very desolate now, but with some memory of the old days still lingering about the delicately-twisted pillars, and the carved doorways, with their grotesque animals, and laughing masks, and quaint heraldic devices, all reminding one of a people who could not think life real till they had made it fantastic. And above the village, and beyond the bend of the river, we used to go in the afternoon, and sketch from one of the big barges that

bring the wine in autumn and the wood in winter down to the sea, or lie in the long grass and make plans *pour la gloire, et pour ennuyer les philistins*, or wander along the low sedgy banks, "matching our reeds in sportive rivalry," as comrades used in the old Sicilian days; and the land was an ordinary land enough, and bare too when one thought of Italy, and how the oleanders were robing the hillsides by Genoa in scarlet, and the cyclamen filling with its purple every valley from Florence to Rome; for there was not much real beauty, perhaps, in it, only long white dusty roads, and straight rows of formal poplars; but now and then some little breaking gleam of broken light would lend to the gray field and the silent barn a secret and a mystery that were hardly their own, would transfigure for one exquisite moment the peasants passing down through the vineyard, or the shepherd watching on the hill, would tip the willows with silver, and touch the river into gold; and the wonder of the effect, with the strange simplicity of the material, always seemed to me to be a little like the quality of these the verses of my friend.

OSCAR WILDE.

The Bibelot

We would fain do for the memory of Ernest Dowson what we have so often attempted in these pages for some of the "spent fames and fallen lights" of Literature, whose most precious gifts have been vainly poured out and, as it would seem, rejected of men. It is enough, possibly, that here and there a reader exists who comes under the indescribable enchantment of that very little in quantity but of ineffable quality and fragrance which the poet of "Cynara" has bequeathed to us.[1] *And it is also permissible to believe that what Mr. Arthur Symons has written of the dead lyrist is of that satisfying order of excellence which Dowson, were he living, would*

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1 The Poems of Ernest Dowson: Verses, The Pierrot of the Minute; Decorations in Verse and Prose. Portland, Maine. Thomas B. Mosher, MDCCCCII. *Quarto. Vellum bds. Pp. xxxviii+163. (82.50 net.) Following our lead the recently published reprint by Mr. John Lane, (London and New York) is a confirmation of our estimate of Dowson, despite the fact that in this later volume the Prose Poems are omitted and, as if to destroy the delicate little Pierrot play four so-called decadent illustrations are reproduced, — artistic impertinences which should have slept forever in a first and only edition!*

surely have wished set forth. Consider the literal truth and beauty that is conveyed in a single critical estimate:

"In the lyric in which he has epitomized himself and his whole life, a lyric which is certainly one of the greatest lyrical poems of our time—he has for once said everything, and he has said it to an intoxicating and perhaps immortal music." This poem with which we open our selections it may be well worth knowing was originally printed in The Century Guild Hobby Horse *for April, 1891, when Dowson was in his twentieth year, (he was born on August 2nd, 1867,) and so far as we are aware was first reprinted by us in* Songs of Adieu, A Little Book of Finale and Farewell, *(1893). Later on included in* The Second Book of the Rhymers Club, *(London, 1894,) it was again and for the last time so far as Dowson was concerned printed in his* Verses, *(London, 1896).*

To know Dowson as he deserves being known we must refer our readers, even at the risk of being charged with undue egoism, to our own edition of his collected poems.

FOR SEPTEMBER:

"TEN O'CLOCK"
BY J. A. M. WHISTLER.

POEMS IN VERSE AND PROSE
By
ERNEST DOWSON.

NON SUM QUALIS ERAM BONAE SUB REGNO CYNARAE.

LAST night, ah, yesternight, betwixt her lips and mine
There fell thy shadow, Cynara! thy breath was shed
Upon my soul between the kisses and the wine;
And I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, I was desolate and bowed my head:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

All night upon mine heart I felt her warm heart beat,
Night-long within mine arms in love and sleep she lay;
Surely the kisses of her bought red mouth were sweet;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
When I awoke and found the dawn was gray:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I have forgot much, Cynara! gone with the wind,
Flung roses, roses riotously with the throng,
Dancing, to put thy pale, lost lilies out of mind;
But I was desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea, all the time, because the dance was long:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

I cried for madder music and for stronger wine,
But when the feast is finished and the lamps expire,
Then falls thy shadow, Cynara! the night is thine;
And I am desolate and sick of an old passion,
Yea hungry for the lips of my desire:
I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion.

AD DOMNULAM SUAM.

Little lady of my heart!
Just a little longer,
Love me: we will pass and part,
Ere this love grow stronger.

I have loved thee, Child! too well,
To do aught but leave thee:
Nay! my lips should never tell
Any tale, to grieve thee.

Little lady of my heart!
Just a little longer,
I may love thee: we will part,
Ere my love grow stronger.

Soon thou leavest fairy-land;
Darker grow thy tresses:
Soon no more of hand in hand;
Soon no more caresses!

Little lady of my heart!
Just a little longer,
Be a child: then, we will part,
Ere this love grow stronger.

VILLANELLE OF MARGUERITES.

"A *LITTLE, passionately, not at all?*"
She casts the snowy petals on the air:
And what care we how many petals fall!

Nay, wherefore seek the seasons to forestall?
It is but playing, and she will not care,
A little, passionately, not at all!

She would not answer us if we should call
Across the years: her visions are too fair;
And what care we how many petals fall!

She knows us not, nor recks if she enthrall
With voice and eyes and fashion of her hair,
A little, passionately, not at all!

Knee-deep she goes in meadow grasses tall,
Kissed by the daisies that her fingers tear:
And what care we how many petals fall!

We pass and go: but she shall not recall
What men we were, nor all she made us bear:
"*A little, passionately, not at all!*"
And what care we how many petals fall!

VANITAS.

BEYOND the need of weeping,
Beyónd the reach of hands,
May she be quietly sleeping,
In what dim nebulous lands?
Ah, she who understands!

The long, long winter weather,
These many years and days,
Since she, and Death, together,
Left me the wearier ways:
And now, these tardy bays!

The crown and victor's token:
How are they worth to-day?
The one word left unspoken,
It were late now to say:
But cast the palm away!

For once, ah once, to meet her,
Drop laurel from tired hands:
Her cypress were the sweeter,
In her oblivious lands:
Haply she understands!

Yet, crossed that weary river,
In some ulterior land,

Or anywhere, or ever,
Will she stretch out a hand?
And will she understand?

Ah, dans ces mornes séjours
Les jamais sont les toujours.

PAUL VERLAINE.

YOU would have understood me, had you waited;
I could have loved you, dear! as well as he:
Had we not been impatient, dear! and fated
Always to disagree.

What is the use of speech? Silence were fitter:
Lest we should still be wishing things unsaid.
Though all the words we ever spake were bitter,
Shall I reproach you dead?

Nay, let this earth, your portion, likewise cover
All the old anger, setting us apart:
Always, in all, in truth was I your lover;
Always, I held your heart.

I have met other women who were tender,
As you were cold, dear! with a grace as rare.
Think you, I turned to them, or made surrender,
I who had found you fair?

Had we been patient, dear! ah, had you waited,
I had fought death for you, better than he:
But from the very first, dear! we were fated
Always to disagree.

Late, late, I come to you, now death discloses
Love that in life was not to be our part:
On your low lying mound between the roses,
Sadly I cast my heart.

I would not waken you: nay! this is fitter;
Death and the darkness give you unto me;
Here we who loved so, were so cold and bitter,
Hardly can disagree.

VAIN RESOLVES.

I SAID: "There is an end of my desire:
Now have I sown, and I have harvested,
And these are ashes of an ancient fire,
Which, verily, shall not be quickened.
Now will I take me to a place of peace,
Forget mine heart's desire;
In solitude and prayer, work out my soul's release.

"I shall forget her eyes, how cold they were;
Forget her voice, how soft it was and low,
With all my singing that she did not hear,
And all my service that she did not know.
I shall not hold the merest memory
Of any days that were,
Within those solitudes where I will fasten me."

And once she passed, and once she raised her eyes,
And smiled for courtesy, and nothing said:
And suddenly the old flame did uprise,
And all my dead desire was quickened.
Yea! as it hath been, it shall ever be,
Most passionless, pure eyes!
Which never shall grow soft, nor change, nor pity me.

A REQUIEM.

NEOBULE, being tired,
Far too tired to laugh or weep,
From the hours, rosy and gray,
Hid her golden face away.
Neobule, fain of sleep,
Slept at last as she desired!

Neobule! is it well,
That you haunt the hollow lands,
Where the poor, dead people stray,
Ghostly, pitiful and gray,
Plucking, with their spectral hands,
Scentless blooms of asphodel?

Neobule, tired to death
Of the flowers that I threw
On her flower-like, fair feet,
Sighed for blossoms not so sweet,
Lunar roses pale and blue,
Lilies of the world beneath.

Neobule! ah, too tired
Of the dreams and days above!
Where the poor, dead people stray,
Ghostly, pitiful and gray,
Out of life and out of love,
Sleeps the sleep which she desired.

IN TEMPORE SENECTUTIS.

WHEN I am old,
And sadly steal apart,
Into the dark and cold,
Friend of my heart!
Remember, if you can,
Not him who lingers, but that other man,
Who loved and sang, and had a beating heart,—
When I am old!

When I am old,
And all Love's ancient fire
Be tremulous and cold:
My soul's desire!
Remember, if you may,
Nothing of you and me but yesterday,
When heart on heart we bid the years conspire
To make us old.

When I am old,
And every star above
Be pitiless and cold:
My life's one love!
Forbid me not to go:
Remember nought of us but long ago,
And not at last, how love and pity strove
When I grew old!

AMANTIUM IRAE.

WHEN this, our rose, is faded,
And these, our days, are done,
In lands profoundly shaded
From tempest and from sun:
Ah, once more come together,
Shall we forgive the past,
And safe from worldly weather
Possess our souls at last?

Or in our place of shadows
Shall still we stretch an hand
To green, remembered meadows,
Of that old pleasant land?
And vainly there foregathered,
Shall we regret the sun?
The rose of love, ungathered?
The bay, we have not won?

Ah, child! the world's dark marges
May lead to Nevermore,
The stately funeral barges
Sail for an unknown shore,
And love we vow to-morrow,
And pride we serve to-day:
What if they both should borrow
Sad hues of yesterday?

Our pride! Ah, should we miss it,
  Or will it serve at last?
Our anger, if we kiss it,
  Is like a sorrow past.
While roses deck the garden,
  While yet the sun is high,
Doff sorry pride for pardon,
  Or ever love go by.

Dum nos fata sinunt, oculos satiemus Amore.
PROPERTIUS.

CEASE smiling, Dear! a little while be sad,
Here in the silence, under the wan moon;
Sweet are thine eyes, but how can I be glad,
Knowing they change so soon?

For Love's sake, Dear, be silent! Cover me
In the deep darkness of thy falling hair:
Fear is upon me and the memory
Of what is all men's share.

O could this moment be perpetuate!
Must we grow old, and leaden-eyed and gray,
And taste no more the wild and passionate
Love sorrows of to-day?

Grown old, and faded, Sweet! and past desire,
Let memory die, lest there be too much ruth,
Remembering the old, extinguished fire
Of our divine, lost youth.

O red pomegranate of thy perfect mouth!
My lips' life-fruitage, might I taste and die,
Here in thy garden, where the scented south
Wind chastens agony;

Reap death from thy live lips in one long kiss,
And look my last into thine eyes and rest:
What sweets had life to me sweeter than this
Swift dying on thy breast?

Or, if that may not be, for Love's sake, Dear!
Keep silence still, and dream that we shall lie,
Red mouth to mouth, entwined, and always hear
The south wind's melody,

Here in thy garden, through the sighing boughs,
Beyond the reach of time and chance and change,
And bitter life and death, and broken vows,
That sadden and estrange.

THE DEAD CHILD.

SLEEP on, dear, now
The last sleep and the best,
And on thy brow,
And on thy quiet breast,
Violets I throw.

Thy scanty years
Were mine a little while;
Life had no fears
To trouble thy brief smile
With toil or tears.

Lie still, and be
For evermore a child!
Not grudgingly,
Whom life has not defiled,
I render thee.

Slumber so deep,
No man would rashly wake;
I hardly weep,
Fain only, for thy sake,
To share thy sleep.

Yes, to be dead,
Dead, here with thee to-day,—
When all is said

'Twere good by thee to lay
My weary head.

The very best!
Ah, child so tired of play,
I stand confessed:
I want to come thy way,
And share thy rest.

VILLANELLE OF THE POET'S ROAD.

WINE and woman and song,
Three things garnish our way:
Yet is day over long.

Lest we do our youth wrong,
Gather them while we may:
Wine and woman and song.

Three things render us strong,
Vine leaves, kisses and bay;
Yet is day over long.

Unto us they belong,
Us the bitter and gay,
Wine and woman and song.

We, as we pass along,
Are sad that they will not stay;
Yet is day over long.

Fruits and flowers among,
What is better than they:
Wine and woman and song?
Yet is day over long.

FOUR LYRICS AFTER PAUL VERLAINE.

I.

Il pleut doucement sur la ville.
RIMBAUD.

TEARS fall within mine heart,
As rain upon the town:
Whence does this languor start,
Possessing all mine heart?

O sweet fall of the rain
Upon the earth and roofs!
Unto an heart in pain,
O music of the rain!

Tears that have no reason
Fall in my sorry heart:
What! there was no treason?
This grief hath no reason.

Nay! the more desolate,
Because, I know not why,
(Neither for love nor hate)
Mine heart is desolate.

II.

Colloque Sentimental.

Into the lonely park all frozen fast,
Awhile ago there were two forms who passed.

Lo, are their lips fallen and their eyes dead,
Hardly shall a man hear the words they said.

Into the lonely park, all frozen fast,
There came two shadows who recall the past.

"Dost thou remember our old ecstasy?"—
"Wherefore should I possess that memory?"—

"Doth thine heart beat at my sole name alway?
Still dost thou see my soul in visions?" "Nay!"—

"They were fair days of joy unspeakable,
Whereon our lips were joined?"—"I cannot tell."—

"Were not the heavens blue, was not hope high?"—
"Hope has fled vanquished down the darkling sky."—

So through the barren oats they wanderèd,
And the night only heard the words they said.

III.

Spleen.

Around were all the roses red,
The ivy all around was black.

Dear, so thou only move thine head,
Shall all mine old despairs awake!

Too blue, too tender was the sky,
The air too soft, too green the sea.

Always I fear, I know not why,
Some lamentable flight from thee.

I am so tired of holly-sprays
And weary of the bright box-tree,

Of all the endless country ways;
Of everything alas! save thee.

IV.

THE sky is up above the roof
So blue, so soft!
A tree there, up above the roof,
Swayeth aloft.

A bell within that sky we see,
Chimes low and faint:
A bird upon that tree we see,
Maketh complaint.

Dear God! is not the life up there,
Simple and sweet?
How peacefully are borne up there
Sounds of the street!

What hast thou done, who comest here,
To weep alway?
Where hast thou laid, who comest here,
Thy youth away?

TO A LADY ASKING FOOLISH QUESTIONS.

WHY am I sorry, Chloe? Because the moon
is far:
And who am I to be straightened in a little
earthly star?

Because thy face is fair? And what if it had
not been,
The fairest face of all is the face I have not
seen.

Because the land is cold, and however I scheme
and plot,
I can not find a ferry to the land where I am
not.

Because thy lips are red and thy breasts upbraid
the snow?
(There is neither white nor red in the pleasance
where I go.)

Because thy lips grow pale and thy breasts grow
dun and fall?
I go where the wind blows, Chloe, and am not
sorry at all.

THREE POEMS IN PROSE.

I.

THE FORTUNATE ISLANDS.

BEARDED, with tawny faces, as they sat on the quay, looking listlessly at nothing with their travelled eyes, I questioned them:

"We have adventured," they said.

"Tell me of your travels, O mariners, of that you have sought and found, of high perils undergone and great salvage and of those fortunate islands which lie in a quiet sea, azure beyond my dreaming."

"We have found nothing. There is nothing saved," they said.

"But tell me, O mariners, for I have travelled a little. I have looked for the woman I might have loved, and the friend we hear of, and the country where I am not. Tell me of your discoveries."

One of them answered:

"We tell you the truth. We are old, withered mariners, and long and far have we wandered in the seas of no discovery. We have been to the end of the last ocean, but there was nothing, not even the things

of which you speak. We have adventured, but we have not found anything, and here we are again in the port of our nativity, and there is only one thing we expect. Is it not so, comrades?"

Each raised a hand of asseveration; and they said: "We tell you the truth: there are no fortunate islands."

And they fell into their old silence.

II.

ABSINTHIA TAETRA.

GREEN changed to white, emerald to an opal: nothing was changed.

The man let the water trickle gently into his glass, and as the green clouded, a mist fell away from his mind.

Then he drank opaline.

Memories and terrors beset him. The past tore after him like a panther and through the blackness of the present he saw the luminous tiger eyes of the things to be.

But he drank opaline.

And that obscure night of the soul, and the valley of humiliation, through which he stumbled were forgotten. He saw blue vistas of undiscovered countries, high pros-

pects and a quiet, caressing sea. The past shed its perfume over him, to-day held his hand as it were a little child, and to-morrow shone like a white star: nothing was changed.

He drank opaline.

The man had known the obscure night of the soul, and lay even now in the valley of humiliation; and the tiger menace of the things to be was red in the skies. But for a little while he had forgotten.

Green changed to white, emerald to an opal: nothing was changed.

III.

THE VISIT.

As though I were still struggling through the meshes of some riotous dream, I heard his knock upon the door. As in a dream, I bade him enter, but with his entry, I awoke. Yet when he entered it seemed to me that I was dreaming, for there was nothing strange in that supreme and sorrowful smile which shone through the mask which I knew. And just as though I had not always been afraid of him I said: "Welcome."

And he said very simply, "I am here."

Dreaming I had thought myself, but the reproachful sorrow of his smile showed me that I was awake. Then dared I open my eyes and I saw my old body on the bed, and the room in which I had grown so tired, and in the middle of the room the pan of charcoal which still smouldered. And dimly I remembered my great weariness and the lost whiteness of Lalage and last year's snows; and these things had been agonies.

Darkly, as in a dream, I wondered why they gave me no more hurt, as I looked at my old body on the bed; why, they were like old maids' fancies (as I looked at my gray body on the bed of my agonies) — like silly toys of children that fond mothers lay up in lavender (as I looked at the twisted limbs of my old body), for these things had been agonies.

But all my wonder was gone when I looked again into the eyes of my guest, and I said:

"I have wanted you all my life."

Then said Death (and what reproachful tenderness was shadowed in his obscure smile):

"You had only to call."

The Bibelot

AMONG *the many books which have presumably served their purpose and are henceforth found only, if at all, in the second-hand bookseller's shop, a thin duodecimo entitled* Essays by Henry Thomas Buckle *(New York, 1863,) occasionally greets the wandering bibliophile and is without doubt relegated to the realm of negligible quantities. Of its contents by far the most important portion,—a review of* Mill on Liberty, *originally contributed to Fraser's Magazine for May, 1859,—was the cause of the remarkable Letter which we reprint in full.*[1]

Some of the most moving appeals to the soul of man are in the nature of apologies or pleas for reversal of judgment, which, in the case of Pooley, deserve to be read and remembered long after the stumbling block of offense has been removed. At the time this village tragedy was enacted it did not seem destined to get beyond its narrow provincial limits. And after fifty years it might reasonably be thought that all human interest had faded away. Unjust judge and the son who defended his father's unrighteousness and who afterwards arrived

at the distinction of being made Lord Chief Justice of England, their victim, and he who unaided and alone procured a reversal of the iniquitous sentence,—all these have closed their earthly account. Why then recall such unhappy far-off things? Why, indeed? For this simple reason: "Pooley's case" probably stands the last of its kind either in England or America, and connects itself with literature in a manner that cannot be set aside. It is, therefore, well within the province of The Bibelot *that this once famous* Letter to a Gentleman *should again see the light together with such comment as we may be able to supply.*

So incredible did the transaction at first appear to the reviewer of Mill's Essay on Liberty *when he came upon it in its naked brutality, that he felt compelled to say: "Notwithstanding my knowledge of Mr. Mill's accuracy, I thought that, in this instance, he must have been mistaken. . . . Even now, when I have carefully investigated the facts to which Mr. Mill only alludes, and have the documents before me, I can hardly bring myself to realize the events which have actually occurred." Thereupon, and in despite of the intreaties of friends*[2] *who feared for the great writer's loss of reputation should he openly espouse the cause of this poor and defenseless peasant,*

as he declared himself bound to do, Henry Thomas Buckle turned aside from a life-long work, with the result that what had been perpetrated in an obscure corner of the kingdom was laid bare before the world.[3] *Not for the first time, indeed, nor for the last, has some great-souled man paused in the midst of his labors for humanity and at the risk of lowered social prestige, struck back at the oppressor of his down-trodden fellowmen.*

Buckle's review of Mill on Liberty *closed with an argument for Immortality of which the peroration is one of the glories of literature:*

"Most earnestly would I again urge upon those who cherish the doctrine of immortality, not to defend it, as they too often do, by arguments which have a basis smaller than the doctrine itself. I long to see this glorious tenet rescued from the jurisdiction of a narrow and sectarian theology, which, foolishly ascribing to a single religion the possession of all truth, proclaims other religions to be false, and debases the most magnificent topics by contracting them within the horizon of its own little vision. Every creed which has existed long and played a great part, contains a large amount of truth, or else it would not have retained its hold upon the human mind. To suppose, however, that any one of them contains the whole truth, is to suppose that as soon as that creed was enunciated the limits of inspiration were reached, and the power of inspiration exhausted. For such a supposition we have no warrant. On the contrary, the history of mankind,

if compared in long periods, shows a very slow, but still a clearly marked, improvement in the character of successive creeds; so that if we reason from the analogy of the past, we have a right to hope that the improvement will continue, and that subsequent creeds will surpass ours. Using the word religion in its ordinary sense, we find that the religious opinions of men depend on an immense variety of circumstances which are constantly shifting. Hence it is, that whatever rests merely upon these opinions has in it something transient and mutable. Well, therefore, may they who take a distant and comprehensive view, be filled with dismay when they see a doctrine like the immortality of the soul defended in this manner. Such advocates incur a heavy responsibility. They imperil their own cause; they make the fundamental depend upon the casual; they support what is permanent by what is ephemeral; and with their books, their dogmas, their traditions, their rituals, their records, and their other perishable contrivances, they seek to prove what was known to the world before these existed, and what, if these were to die away, would still be known, and would remain the common heritage of the human species, and the consolation of myriads yet unborn.''

Is it not well to remember that the man who wrote these words wrote also A Letter to a Gentleman respecting Pooley's Case?

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1 A Letter to a Gentleman respecting Pooley's Case. London: J. W. Parker and Son, 1859. *Octavo. Published in July, 1859, at Buckle's risk and expense, this pamphlet is so rare that we do not recall a single instance of a copy having been offered for sale. Fortunately the text is given in the* Miscellaneous and Posthumous Works of Henry

Thomas Buckle. Edited with a Biographical Notice by Helen Taylor. 3 vols. 8vo. London, Longmans, 1872. *(See vol. I, pp. 71-81.) A new edition, containing all of permanent value in the above, edited by Grant Allen, was issued by the same publishers in 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1885. For the care bestowed in collecting the evidence in 'Pooley's Case' see* The Life and Writings of Henry Thomas Buckle. By Alfred Henry Huth. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1880. *In particular see vol. I, pp. 285, 320, 321; vol. II, pp. 2-6. Reprinted in 1 vol. 8vo. (Appletons.) New York, 1880.*

2 *He gave one significant proof of his uncompromising mode of judging matters of this kind "[intolerance]" in his severe strictures on Sir John Coleridge, which caused deep pain to many of his friends, and to none more than myself." Miss Shirreff, whose view is thus given in the Biographical Notice prefixed to the* Miscellaneous and Posthumous Works of Henry Thomas Buckle, *(see vol. I, p. xxxvii) was a friend of the historian, but for once her opinion was not shared by him. According to this lady one should never attack a transgressor whose intentions were not evil, ("but who can know the human heart" Buckle asks her elsewhere,) least of all an English judge who queerly enough is apparently classed by her with men in general who are "feebly stirred by an appeal to their understanding." Such untoward castigations are not "gentlemanly." It may be so. Buckle said he preferred writing like a* man *first of all. And along with him one might cite the names of other Great-hearts of Literature who have taken upon themselves the righting of wrongs. Consider such letters as he who runs may read:* A Vindication of Thomas Paine: a reply to the [*Editor of*] the New York Observer. By Robert G. Ingersoll, Peoria,

(Ill.) 1877; The Good Gray Poet: A Vindication. By William D. O'Connor, New York, 1866; Stevenson's Father Damien: An Open Letter to the Reverend Doctor Hyde of Honolulu, 1890; *vitriolic, all of them, but of a sort that require no rehandling of the subject.*

3 *"That the conviction was unjust, or at least that the punishment was monstrous, the free pardon — that ridiculous and insulting fiction of the law to screen itself from an acknowledgment that it has been wrong — sufficiently proves. As for the Judge, his friends are placed in the dilemma of either acknowledging that he committed an injustice, or that he was incapable; that he did not observe those signs of lunacy which were patent even to the reporters; that he was so careless to sift the evidence against an undefended, ignorant man, that nothing was brought out at the trial concerning Pooley's hallucinations and his blameless life. It is no excuse for the late Sir John Coleridge, as the* Law Magazine," [*for August, 1859, p. 280,*] *"hints that it should be, that, like the Inquisitors of Spain, his motives were unimpeachable. Their excuse was ignorance; but no man, least of all an English judge, would care to plead that excuse to-day."* *See* Huth's Life and Writings of Buckle, *vol. I, p. 300.*

FOR OCTOBER:
DEATH'S DISGUISES AND
OTHER SONNETS
BY FRANK T. MARZIALS.

LETTER TO A GENTLEMAN
RESPECTING POOLEY'S CASE
By
HENRY THOMAS BUCKLE.

"It should be clearly understood that every man has an absolute and irrefragable right to treat any doctrine as he thinks proper; either to argue against it, or to ridicule it. If his arguments are wrong, he can be refuted; if his ridicule is foolish, he can be out-ridiculed. To this there can be no exception."

HENRY THOMAS BUCKLE.
(Essay: Mill on Liberty.)

FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS WE HAVE FELT OBLIGED TO DEFER WHISTLER'S "TEN O'CLOCK" UNTIL THE FACTS IN THE CASE ARE BETTER KNOWN. IT IS QUITE POSSIBLE THAT IT CANNOT BE LEGALLY REPRINTED IN THIS COUNTRY.

"In the summer of 1857, a poor man, named Thomas Pooley, was gaining his livelihood as a common labourer in Liskeard, in Cornwall, where he had been well known for several years, and had always borne a high character for honesty, industry, and sobriety. . . . This singular man wrote upon a gate a few very silly words expressive of his opinion respecting the potato-rot and the Bible, and also of his hatred of Christianity. For this, as well as for using language equally absurd . . a clergyman in the neighbourhood lodged an information against him. . . . At the next assizes, he was brought before the judge. . . But neither this, [mental unsoundness,] nor the fact that he was ignorant, poor, and friendless, produced any effect upon that stony-hearted man who now held him in his gripe. He was sentenced to be imprisoned for a year and nine months. . . The prosecutor, who lodged the information against Pooley, . . . was the Rev. Paul Bush. The magistrate, who . . committed him for trial, was the Rev. James Glencross. The judge who passed the sentence which destroyed his reason and beggared his family, was Mr. Justice Coleridge. . . .

The charge, therefore, which I bring against this unjust and unrighteous judge is, that he passed a sentence of extreme severity upon a poor and friendless man in a remote part of the kingdom, . . ; that he did this by virtue of a law which had fallen into disuse, . . and that he would not have dared to commit such an act, in the face of a London audience, and in the full light of the London press. . . Happily for mankind, literature is a real power, and tyranny quakes at it. . . I would it were known in every cottage, that the intellectual classes sympathise, not with the upper ranks but with the lower. . . Then, indeed, would literature be the religion of liberty, and we . . might feel that we act in the purest spirit of our creed when we denounce tyranny in high places, when we chastise the insolence of office, and when we vindicate the cause of Thomas Pooley against Justice Coleridge."

Essay: Mill on Liberty.

LETTER TO A GENTLEMAN

RESPECTING POOLEY'S CASE.[1]

LONDON: June, 1859.

SIR,—You are quite right in supposing that I have read a letter which is signed "John Duke Coleridge," and published in "Fraser's Magazine" for the present month. But you are wrong in thinking that the tone of the letter surprises me. When I held up to public opprobrium that, for our time, almost incredible transaction in which the name of Coleridge was painfully conspicuous, the indignation which I felt prevented me from measuring my language, and I did not care to search for soft and dainty words in relating how, under shelter of the law, an outrage had been perpetrated upon a poor, an honest, a defenceless, and a half-witted man. I wrote as I thought it behoved me to write, and I rejoice that I did so. Since, however, I did not spare the principal actors of that deed, I could not expect that Mr. Coleridge should wish to spare me. And I must, in common justice, acquit him of any

[1] London: J. W. Parker and Son, 1859.

such intent. He has done his utmost. He is so anxious to be severe that he has not only expressed anger, he has even tried to express contempt. He has imputed to me nearly every kind of baseness and of folly. He has ascribed to me sentiments which I never entertained, and language which I never used. He has charged me with ignorance, cowardice, malignity, and slander. He has attempted to ruin my reputation as an author, and to blast my character as a man, by representing me as a perverter of facts, a fabricator of falsehoods, a propagator of libels, and a calumniator of innocence. To all this I shall make no reply. Whatever I have done in the matter of Sir John Coleridge, or in other matters, is open and before the world. I live merely for literature; my works are my only actions; they are not wholly unknown, and I leave it to them to protect my name. If they cannot do that, they are little worth. I have never written an essay, or even a single line anonymously, and nothing would induce me to do so, because I deem anonymous writing of every kind to be an evasion of responsibility, and consequently unsuited to the citizen of a

free country. Therefore it is that I can easily be judged. I have myself supplied the materials, and to them I appeal. So far from despising public opinion, I regard it with great, though not with excessive respect; and I acknowledge in it the principal source of such influence as I have been able to wield. But this respect which I feel for public opinion is only when I consider it as a whole. For the opinion of individuals I care nothing, because, now at least, there is no one whose censure I fear, or whose praise I covet. Once, indeed, it was otherwise, but that is past and gone for ever. Desiring rather to move masses than to influence persons, I am nowise troubled by accusations before which many would shrink. They who dislike my principles, and who dread that boldness of inquiry, and that freedom of expression which this age desires, and which I seek to uphold, have already taken their course, and done what they could to bring me into discredit, and prevent my writings from being read. If I say that they have failed, I am not speaking arrogantly, but am simply stating a notorious fact. Yet they employed

the resources with which Mr. John Duke Coleridge is familiar. They, too, impugned my veracity, aspersed my motives, and denied my honesty. You know, sir, that I have never in the slightest degree noticed these charges, though some of them were prepared with considerable skill. You will hardly suppose that having refused to defend myself against men of ability, I should now, at the eleventh hour, put myself on my trial at the bidding of this new assailant. Mr. John Duke Coleridge is quite welcome to publish his sentiments respecting me, and I do not wish to disturb them. But, though I shall not answer his accusations, I shall examine his defence.

An act of cruelty has been committed by an English judge, and I have arraigned the perpetrator before the bar of public opinion, because that is the only tribunal to which he is amenable. His son, by pleading on his behalf, has recognised the jurisdiction. It remains for me to consider his reply; it will finally remain for the public to decide on its validity. If it is valid, the charge falls to the ground; the accused is absolved; and I, as the accuser, am covered with

confusion. If it is not valid, the failure of the defence will strengthen the force of the accusation, and even they who wished to favour the judge will be compelled to allow, that what they would fain have palliated, as the momentary ebullition of an arbitrary temper, swells into far graver matter, when, instead of being regretted, it is vindicated with stubborn pertinacity, and in an obstinate and angry spirit.

The first thing which strikes me in Mr. Coleridge's apology for his father is, that some of the most serious charges which I have brought are passed over in complete silence. They are not only unanswered, they are not even noticed. On the other hand, several charges which I did not bring are satisfactorily refuted. Indeed the greater part of Mr. Coleridge's letter is occupied with repelling imaginary accusations. He ascribes to me assertions which I neither made nor intended to make; and then he decisively proves that those assertions are false. His victory is complete, but it is gained over himself, and not over me. He takes infinite pains to show that I am altogether wrong in supposing that Sir John

Coleridge, an English judge, could refuse to try a prisoner who was brought before him. I am equally wrong in supposing that he could try one who was not brought before him. I am either ignorant or malicious, when I affirm that he could have determined what laws should be enforced, and what laws should not be enforced. I ought to have been aware that judicial power is different from legislative power; that the judge, instead of making laws, merely administers them; and that he is, in fact, unable to fix on the county in which the trial shall be held. It is no part of his duty to collect evidence for the prosecution; nor is he expected to concert measures with the counsel in order to convict the prisoner. These things are not done in England, and it is scandalous for me to assume that they are done. It is still more scandalous that upon such assumptions I should have presumed to impeach the conduct of Sir John Coleridge. The audacity is monstrous. How dare I thus assail a blameless and immaculate man whose fame has hitherto been unsullied? Before I could bring these charges I must have been lost to all shame.

What I have alleged respecting the existence of a conspiracy between the clergy, the judge, and the government, is equally preposterous, and is of itself enough to ruin the reputation of a writer who pretends to be an historian. The clergy were in Cornwall; the Home Office is in London; and the judge is a traveller, who, going from place to place, has no means of ascertaining beforehand what causes he will have to try. How wicked, and yet how foolish I am, to say that these distant and discordant parties conspired together against a poor well-sinker! Moreover, if I had enquired into the facts, I should have learnt that these proceedings were in the latter half of 1857, and that from July to December in that year, the Home Minister was Sir George Grey, and the Under Secretaries at the Home Office were Mr. Massey and Mr. Waddington, most worthy, and indeed distinguished men, utterly incapable of entering into that nefarious compact with which I have taunted them.[1]

It is after this fashion that Mr. Coleridge

[1] See at the end of this letter, extracts from Mr. Coleridge's apology for his father.

defends his father. All these charges, he rebuts with a closeness and minuteness of argument deserving the highest praise, but where he found the charges I cannot tell. Certainly they are not in my Essay, and they never were in my mind. Meanwhile, the real accusation remains. To that he makes no reply. Perhaps he was right. Perhaps he found it easier to answer what I had not said than what I had said. A compact between a Cornish clergyman and a Cabinet Minister. A private understanding between an English barrister and an English judge![1] A judge trying a case in which he

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1 The following is the only passage in which I even allude to Mr. Coleridge: "He (Pooley) had no counsel to defend him, but the son of the judge acted as counsel to prosecute him. The father and the son performed their parts with zeal, and were perfectly successful. Under their auspices Pooley was found guilty." Every word of this is literally and strictly true. Mr. Coleridge did prosecute Pooley; he did perform his part with zeal, as also did his father; he succeeded; and Pooley was found guilty in consequence of his address, and of the summing-up of the judge. Yet out of these simple and irrefutable statements Mr. Coleridge has constructed a charge of "private understanding" between himself and the judge. See extracts at the end of this letter

had got up evidence for the prosecution! A judge having guilty foreknowledge of the depositions of witnesses! A dark and wicked conspiracy between Sir George Grey, Sir John Coleridge, Mr. Massey, and Mr. Waddington, the sole object of which was to punish a poor labourer! Truly Mr. Coleridge must be very confident of the goodness of his cause, if he thinks that it will bear handling in this way. I appeal to you, sir, and to every one who has read my Essay, whether or not these things are in it. If they are in it let the passages be produced. If they are not in it, I submit that the zeal of Mr. Coleridge has carried him a little too far, and that he has been rather indiscreet in laying himself open to so obvious a challenge.

The first charge against Sir John Coleridge is that he committed an act of cruelty. In determining whether or not his sentence upon Pooley was cruel, it is necessary to consider what the sentence was. But this, Mr. Coleridge, in the whole of his long letter, carefully abstains from mentioning. He does not tell his readers that poor Pooley, a man exemplary in all the relations

of life, and of unstained character, was ordered to be imprisoned for a year and nine months simply because he wrote and uttered words which neither hurt nor traduced any living being. In those words there was neither calumny against individuals, nor disaffection towards government. There was nothing to set man against man, or to set men against their rulers. All this, Mr. Coleridge knows, and does not attempt to deny. He also knows that on this ground, and on no other, Pooley was condemned to an imprisonment of twenty-one months. Why does he keep this fact back? How is it that he never chances to mention what the punishment was? How is it that, though he frequently quotes passages from my Essay, he by no accident ever quotes one in which the act is clearly set forth? Why does he, when professing to defend his father against a particular charge, conceal the charge, and then labour hard to defend him against other charges which no one brought? If Pooley had not been punished, Sir John Coleridge would not have been accused. Surely, then, the amount of the punishment is an essential part of the accusation, and is

more pertinent to the issue than those speculative enquiries in which Mr. Coleridge, with great ingenuity, has proved how unlikely it is that there should have been a conspiracy between Sir George Grey, Sir John Coleridge, Mr. Massey, and Mr. Waddington.

But this is of a piece with the rest of Mr. Coleridge's letter. For with other and most important items in my accusation he deals in the same manner; that is to say, he does not deal with them at all. I charged Sir John Coleridge with passing a sentence which, independently of the other objections against it, was alien to the spirit of the age. To this I find no reply. I charged him with bringing the administration of justice into disrepute, by encouraging the prevailing and most dangerous notion that the poor are more harshly treated than the rich. Again, I find no reply. I charged him with doing this on the person of an unhappy, but most industrious man, whose family were, consequently, left either to starve or to beg. Still, no reply. I charged him, and the result has proved that I charged him truly, with exasperating the friends of liberty, and rekindling old animosities. No reply. I charged him

with taking as his victim an undefended prisoner, whom our law humanely supposes to have the judge for his counsel, but who on this occasion had the judge for his oppressor. No reply. I charged him with inflicting a punishment which, severe at any period, is particularly so in our time, when all humane and thinking men aim at lessening penalties, rather than the increasing them. This, too, Mr. Coleridge being unable to deny, passes over in silence.

Such is his plan. It is a cunning artifice with which the rhetoricians of old were long since familiar. With them, as with him, taciturnity was a favourite stratagem, but taciturnity in order to be effective, should be invariable. Otherwise there is danger that when a man does speak, he will speak at the wrong time, and say the wrong things; and certainly one of the pleas which Mr. Coleridge has set up is so eccentric, that it will expose him to this imputation. He does not question my assertion that penalties are becoming milder, but he meets the consequences of that assertion in a way peculiar to himself. He says that Sir John Coleridge being employed to administer the law, and

not to make it, was obliged to administer it as he found it. The judge, says Mr. Coleridge, could not choose "what laws he would or would not put in force."[1] Unhappy judge! he had no choice. His hands were tied. His leaning was on the side of humanity; he longed to be merciful; but he was in the melancholy position of being obliged to enforce an odious law. He was so straitened and circumscribed that he was, in fact, a victim rather than an oppressor. Really, sir, it is humiliating to read such arguments; it is still more humiliating to have to answer them. What! no choice! Has an English judge no option? Has he no latitude? Is no discretion vested in him? Must he always exact the letter of the bond, and take the last ounce of flesh? Mr. Coleridge is indeed in difficulties if this is his best defence. The fact is that an assize is rarely held without an instance of the judge imposing a light, and often a mere nominal,

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[1] I quote Mr. Coleridge's own words; but the entire passage will be found in the extracts at the end of this letter. Mr. Coleridge had probably forgotten his previous admission, "that the sentence is a perfectly fair ground for observation."

punishment, when the law allows him to impose a severe one. That part of our common law which coerces the expression of opinion, was established in a barbarous and ignorant age, when the very amusements of men were brutal, and when they delighted in inflicting pain and in seeing it inflicted. It was an age in which human life was disregarded, and human suffering made a jest. To suppose that an English judge is bound to follow with servile acquiescence all the decisions of such a period, is to suppose what is not only absurd in itself, but is contradicted by the judicial history of this country. In England the abrogation of a law is gradual, and usually passes through three stages. First, it is reasoned against or ridiculed; then it falls into discredit; and finally, it is either repealed, or else by common consent it is disused. This is the history of those cruel laws which our ancestors cherished; such, for example, as the laws relating to heresy, witchcraft, and slavery, which, before they were done away with, were opposed by public opinion and discountenanced by our judges. All these things are part of the same scheme;

they belong to the same turn of mind, and must stand or fall together. It is natural that when slavery was legal, heresy should have been illegal. It is also natural that, in such a state of society, heretical or blasphemous expressions should be punished. We have, however, long been outgrowing those views, not because we love blasphemy, but because we love liberty. We look upon impious language as proof of a vulgar mind; but we are not to cast into prison an honest man and beggar his family, on account of his mind being vulgar. Even if the blasphemy is of such a kind as to indicate depravity on the part of the utterer, no one is concerned with it unless it tends to produce a breach of the peace. If the public peace is in danger, he who endangers it should be restrained. But to punish blasphemy irrespectively of these wider considerations is a thing which this age will not tolerate, and which is contrary to the whole tone and scope both of modern literature and of modern legislation. The charge against Thomas Pooley was that he uttered blasphemy. On this charge he was committed; on this he was indicted; and on this he was sentenced. The crime

alleged was not that he injured men's property, nor that he insulted them, nor that he provoked them to violence. He wrote upon a private gate, which he had no right to do, and for which, therefore, redress might have been reasonably exacted. That was an offence; and if his conduct was likely to disturb the public peace, that was another offence. But instead of receiving such slight punishment as these offences would justify, he was punished as a blasphemer; and a judge was found capable of sentencing this poor, helpless, and ignorant man to twenty-one months' imprisonment. Shame! shame on it! In compliance with the humane and enlightened spirit of this age, the practice of punishing men for words which calumniate no individual and imperil no government, was fast falling into disuse when it was revived by Sir John Coleridge. This is his offence, and a most serious and, so far as he is concerned, irreparable offence it is. It is a revival of cruelty; it is a revival of bigotry; it is a revival of the tastes, the habits, and the feelings of those days of darkness which we might have hoped had gone for ever.

I have only one more point to notice in

Mr. Coleridge's apology for his father. Mr. Coleridge assures us that, when Pooley was sentenced, the judge was not aware of the state of his mind. I rejoice to hear it; I am most willing to accept any explanation which can soften so terrible a transaction and deprive it of some of its horrors. Consider the sentence as we may, it is enormous, and posterity will hardly believe that, in the existing state of public opinion, it could have been passed. For the honour of the judicial character and for the honour of human nature, let us make what abatement we can, and be glad to think that this heavy article in the impeachment may be withdrawn. That Pooley was deranged is certain. We have the concurrent testimony of his neighbours; we have eminent medical opinion; we have the observations of reporters who were present at his trial; we have the fact of his having been sent to a lunatic asylum; and we have the additional fact of his being pardoned on the ground of insanity. Against such evidence, the unsupported assertions of the attorney for the prosecution are not worth a straw. I had supposed that what was so clearly marked as to excite

the attention of the reporters for the press, could hardly have escaped the notice of the presiding judge.

But Mr. Coleridge declares that it did escape him. Be it so. It says little for his perspicacity that he should have overlooked what was obvious to less practised eyes. This, however, I pass over; and I leave the other facts, respecting which there is neither doubt nor cavil, to speak for themselves. Upon those facts I have elsewhere delivered my mind, and delivered it freely. The circumstances to which I have directed public attention were not sought for by me. I did not go out of my road to find them. I had never heard of the case of Pooley until I came across it in the book which I was reviewing. As it had fallen in my way, I thought it my duty first to investigate it, and then to expose it. In exposing it, I denounced the principal actors, especially him who gave the finishing touch to the whole.

By doing so I have incurred the hostility of his friends, and I have, moreover, displeased a large class of persons who consider that an English judge occupies so elevated a

position that he ought not to be made the object of personal attack. To me, however, it appears that his elevation, and his name, and the pomp and the dignity and the mighty weight of that office which he held, are among the circumstances which justify the course I have taken. If he had been a man of no account, it would hardly have been worth while for me to pause, in the midst of my solitary labours, that I might turn aside and smite him. For, what is he to me? Our ways of life and our career are so completely different, that between us there can be no rivalry; and the motives which commonly induce one man to attack another can have no place. I cannot envy him, for I see nothing to envy. Neither can I fear him; nor can I expect to derive any benefit from hurting him. Unless, therefore, it is supposed that I am actuated by a spirit of pure, naked, and motiveless malignity, I have a right to be believed when I say that in this matter my sole object has been to promote the great and, to me, the sacred cause of liberty of speech and of publication. This, indeed, lies near to my heart. And it is this alone which gives to the present case

its real importance, and will prevent it from sinking into oblivion. Yet a few years, and Sir John Coleridge and Thomas Pooley will be numbered with the dead. But though the men will die, the principles which they represent are immortal. The powerful and intolerant judge seeking to stop the mouth of the poor and friendless well-sinker is but the type of a far older and wider struggle. In every part of the civilized world the same contest is raging, and the question is still undecided, whether or not men shall say what they like; in other words, whether language is to be refuted by language, or whether it is to be refuted by force. Disguise it as you will, this is the real issue. In this great warfare between liberty and repression, Sir John Coleridge has chosen his side and I have chosen mine. But he, being armed with the power of the executive government, has been able to carry matters with a high hand, and to strengthen his party, not indeed by arguments, but by violence. Instead of refuting, he imprisons. My weapons are of another kind, and shall I not use them? Am I for ever to sit by in silence? Are all the blows to be dealt from

one side, and none from the other? I think not. I think it is but right and fitting that Sir John Coleridge, and those who agree with him, should be taught that literature is able to punish as well as to persuade, and that she never exercises her high vocation with greater dignity than when, upholding the weak against the strong, she lets the world see that she is no respecter of persons, but will, if need be, strike at the highest place, and humble the proudest name.

I have now finished the task which I set to myself, and which I undertook simply because I thought it ought to be done, and I could not learn that any one more competent was likely to do it. The accusation and the defence being both before the world, we may fairly suppose that the matter is thoroughly sifted, and the circumstances which are essential separated from those which are casual. It remains for the public to form their opinion; and I trust that in doing so they will not hear one side only, but will carefully read Mr. Coleridge's apology for his father. In asking this, I am by no means disinterested; since his letter, by leaving the principal charges untouched,

is a tacit assumption that they cannot be rebutted. His defence fully justifies my attack; and, if he is willing to agree to the proposal, I wish for nothing better than that both attack and defence should be reprinted side by side, and circulated together as widely as possible, so that they may be read wherever the English people are to be found, or wherever the English tongue is known.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,

HENRY THOMAS BUCKLE.

Although I have expressed a hope that every one who reads this pamphlet will also read Mr. Coleridge's letter, I think it advisable, as a further precaution, to reprint the following passages. They are all to be found in "Fraser's Magazine" for June, and are copied word for word from the letter which Mr. Coleridge addressed to the editor:—

"Mr. Buckle's libel. . . . I need not tell you that it is a libel, nor need I offer you any opinion as to the effect on the character of your Magazine of publishing a tissue of what I must call coarse personal malevolence. . . . Intolerable licentiousness of speech. . . . Licence of slander. . . . His many columns of slander. . . . The base charges which he has insinuated, but has not had the courage to set down in plain and simple words. . . . It is certainly hard that a person like Mr. Buckle should be able to put a blameless man on his

defence by reckless accusation. . . . Dirt thrown by the meanest hand. . . . Imputations of the basest kind. . . . Dirty stuff. . . . Mr. Buckle does not comprehend the common feelings of a gentleman. . . . Of me he says he knows nothing; yet he insinuates of a man whom he does not know, that he, a barrister, was party to a private understanding with the judge (that judge his own father) in a criminal case, to oppress a poor undefended criminal, and pervert the course of justice. . . .

"That Mr. Buckle should have thought such conduct possible in an English advocate of any standing, that he should have made such a charge without evidence and without inquiry, is a proof that his learning (if he be a learned man) is not education, and has not raised him above the feelings and prejudices of a thoroughly vulgar mind. . . . . The man (Pooley) was there to be tried on a charge which neither Sir John Coleridge nor I had any more to do with, nor knew any more about before the assizes took place at Bodmin, than Mr. Buckle himself. That a judge selects whom he will try, and where he will try them; that he can try or not try at his pleasure persons who are arraigned before him; that he can refuse, if he pleases, to put in force the law he is sent to administer, and choose which laws he will enforce and which he will not; that he or the counsel for the prosecution, or both of them, have anything whatever to do with getting up cases against prisoners, are matters which Mr. Buckle really seems as if he believed, but as to which he displays ignorance to a degree hardly credible. . . . . It is familiar to all persons of ordinary education that a judge in the position of Sir John Coleridge had and could have no choice whether he

would try a particular prisoner or not, in what county he would try him, and what laws he would or would not put in force. . . . . From July to December 1857, the Home Secretary was Sir George Grey, and the Under Secretaries at the Home Office were Mr. Massey and Mr. Waddington. The notion that these distinguished men, or any of them, would join in a conspiracy in order to please Sir John Coleridge and two Cornish clergymen, to suppress freedom of speech, crush liberty, and do injustice to a poor man till they were terrified by the petitioners mentioned by Mr. Buckle, is a notion so excessively ridiculous, that, except for the total absence of humour from Mr. Buckle's composition, one might suspect him of attempting a gloomy joke."

The Bibelot

A *LITTLE parchment covered book*[1] *seldom found, even in the traditional two-penny box, is here drawn upon to the extent of quite half its contents. Of the various anthologies good and bad, (save only Mr. Stedman's noble compilation,) no one of them all had space, apparently, for what impressed itself upon us at first reading as lapidary work of an unusual order of excellence.*

It would furthermore appear that Death's Disguises, *bearing though it does the hall-mark of indubitable poetry, received slight attention from critics of the day: perhaps one has to do somewhat more than print a single small volume if he would win such distinguished and immediate consideration. Or is it one of those ironies of literary life that "the young lions of the Press," much more familiar with what lies lightlier on the surface, passed by these two-score sonnets, possibly confounding them with the*

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1 Death's Disguises and Other Sonnets, by Frank T. Marzials, London, Walter Scott, 24 Warwick Lane, Paternoster Row, 1889. *Fcap 8vo, wrappers, pp. 59.*

work of a namesake, Théophile Marzials,[2] *whose songs in their wider vogue eclipsed for that particular season the undertones of the lesser appreciated singer?*

Let us now close this brief appreciation with the sestet of the first of Two Sonnet-Songs (*omitted because accessible in* The Victorian Anthology). *In words far too exquisitely cadenced not to be accentuated in quotation, the Sirens thus bring to an end their song to Orpheus and his mariners:*

"What of renown, ye winds, when storms are done?
A faded foam-flower on a wearying wave.
All toil is but the digging of a grave.
Here let them rest awhile ere set of sun,
And sip the honey'd moments one by one —
So fleet, so sweet, so few to squander or save."

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2 *The reputation of Théophile Marzials as a composer of "artistic and captivating songs" is sufficiently well known: his "Twickenham Ferry" even now is not precisely what one would call "a back number." Far different has been the fate of* A Gallery of Pigeons and Other Poems *(London, 1873,) wherein, (strangely forgotten by Mr. Stedman, even,) lies embedded one lyric of supreme and bitter pathos.*

FOR NOVEMBER:
VISION AND MEMORY
BY EDWARD MCCURDY.

DEATH'S DISGUISES AND OTHER SONNETS

By

FRANK T. MARZIALS.

DEATH'S DISGUISES.

I.

DEATH AS THE TEACHER OF LOVE-LORE.

'Twas in mid Autumn, and the woods were still.
A brooding mist from out the marshlands lay
Like age's clammy hand upon the day,
Soddening it; — and the night rose dank and chill.

I watched the sere leaves falling, falling, till
Old thoughts, old hopes, seemed fluttering too away,
And then I sighed to think how life's decay,
And change, and time's mischances, Love might kill.

Sudden a shadowy horseman, at full speed
Spurring a pale horse, passed me swiftly by,
And mocking shrieked, "Thy love is dead indeed,
Haste to the burial!" — With a bitter cry
I swooned, and wake to wonder at my creed,
Learning from Death that Love can never die.

II.

DEATH AS THE LITTLE LOVE-GOD.

Sunset and moonrise mingling in the sky
Made dreamlight, and beside the village well
The maidens sat, singing the songs that tell
Of Love;—and then a troop of knights went by.
And with them rode a boy, right roguishly,
A little archer wight, who in his selle
Turned as they passed, and shot a shaft that fell
Full in a maiden's budding breast;—her cry
Rose sharp and sudden, and at the sound out-rung
Her light companions' laughter, and he too,
The sweet boy-bowman, smiled, as marksmen do,
Though bitterly methought for one so young.
But she the shaft had struck still sighed and sighed
As one in pain, and not long after died.

III.

DEATH AS THE KING'S COURTIER.

"I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive. Yea, better is he than both they, which hath not yet been, who has not seen the evil work that is done under the sun."

ECCLESIASTES.

COUCHED in the lap of the last concubine,
Satiate of bitter knowledge, weary-wise,
Watching through heedless and half-opened eyes
The rhythmic dancer-groups divide, entwine,
Divide again in sway and swirl divine,
Where fitful peeps and lingers, peeps and flies,
Some unvailed charm voluptuous — so lies
The languid king, and lifts his cup for wine.

And at the call there comes, with creaking gait,
Yet louting low, in uncouth courtier grace,
One rich apparell'd in a robe of state,
At sight of whom all, all shrink back a space —
Save the wan king; he, slow, without debate,
Drains down the cup; — and then they hide his face.

IV.

DEATH AS THE DISTRICT VISITOR.

On a poor pallet in a workhouse ward
A woman lay, sore wasted by disease,
Drinking life's cup to the last pauper lees,
Bitter to taste, and grudgingly outpoured.

And, as it were an angel from the Lord,
A lady came, voiced like the hum of bees
In summer, or the murmur of far seas,
Who kissed the brow, all scarred and trouble-scored,
Smoothed the poor restless limbs upon the bed,
And sang as to a child that slumbereth.
And then, her task being done, she turned her head,
And in her face I saw, with bated breath,
The calm great beauty of the newly dead; —
And lo that gracious lady's name was Death!

V.

DEATH AS THE FOOL.

In the high turret chamber sat the sage,
Striving to wring its secrets from the scroll
Of time; and hard the task, for roll on roll
Was blurred with blood and tears, or blank with age.

So that at last a hunger seized him, a rage
Of richer lore than our poor life can dole,
And loud he called on Death to dower his soul
With the great past's unrifled heritage.

And lo, a creaking step upon the stair,
A croak of song, a jingle, — and Death came in
Mumming in motley, with a merry din
And jangle of bells, and droning this refrain,
"God help the fools who count on death for gain."

So had the sage death-bell and passing-prayer.

VI.

DEATH AS THE HARLOT.

WHAT time the night goes flying with swifter feet,
And ere the break of dawn the reveller throng
Flares out its vinous last of riot and song, —
I saw Death as a harlot walk the street.

And for a space it seemed none cared to greet
That weirder beauty, and some thought not wrong
To fleer and flout her passing, till one looked long
And loved her, and cried aloud, "Ay, bitter-sweet,
Yet sweeter than all these!" and as he spoke
He kissed her on the mouth in all men's sight.
Whereat some shrank back shuddering, or fled aghast,
And his late leman shivered the waning night
With shrill sob-laughter.
But those lovers passed —
Whither I know not, — and the morning broke.

VII.

DEATH AS THE FRIEND.

(RETHEL'S WOODCUT.)

"SEE the long day is dwindling to its close;
The sun dips down; the night flows in apace,
With spray-cool breath blown freshly in my face,
And wavelet whisperings of a long repose.

"And who art thou — how still the twilight grows —
Hast stolen in to take my ringer's place?
Ah! Death, old friend, for this I yield thee grace,
Thou art as welcome as a winter's rose.

"Here will I sit, and listen to the bell
Rippling the silence that is gathering round
With sounds that swoon, and swoon, and faintly swell,
And swoon again, till silence and sweet sound
Melt in the murmur of a faint farewell, —
Die unto nothing — and so rest — is found."

VIII.

DEATH AS THE SWEET SINGER SENT FROM GOD.

A silvery song came stealing through the night,
Sweet as the faint far echo of a hymn
Full chaunted by the choir of cherubim,
Or lark's clear singing in its heavenward flight.

And, looking forth, I saw Death clothed in light,
Who smiled, and said, "Of old men's eyes were dim,
And I, in sooth, was some deal gaunt and grim,
But Christ hath made me fair in all men's sight."

Therewith he struck his harp, and sang the strain
Nearer and fuller, that in its soar and swell
The very voice of heaven seemed audible,
And mighty voices of the past, and dear
Beyond all thought, and ah! sweet Death, how near,
Voices long loved and lost, now heard again.

DEATH UNDISGUISED.

"Ah! Death, thou wildering Proteus, that dost wear
Such shifting shapes in human phantasies,
Fain would I see thy face without disguise,
And know thee as thou art for foul or fair."

Then Death appeared, responsive to my prayer,
In his own aspect, grandly calm and wise,
With a strange light of knowledge in his eyes,
But kind and gracious;—and he blest me there.

And from that day, as friend would walk with friend,
We walk the world together, he and I,
And oft he holds with me high colloquy,
So that the ways of life, through which we wend,
Are lit with nobler purpose, and the end
And final goal seems blent with the far sky.

LA JOCONDE OF LEONARDO DA VINCI.

In her eternal beauty she stands there
Among the gods for ever. At her feet
I see the hopes of men uprise, and beat
Like crested waves, joy-sparkling and most fair;
I see the Poet, with his laurel'd hair,
Rapt in his wonder-world; the Thinker, meet
To track shy Truth to her last still retreat;
The Statesman, strong of will to do and dare,
A king of men; the Lover, in whose breast
The sweetest twilight dawn is flushing fast;
The Saint, whose prayer is turned to praise at last;
The Mother musing by her babe at rest;—
How bright their hopes flash upward! She, the while,
Looks down upon them with the same still smile.

LAUS VENERIS.

(Mr. Burne Jones' Picture.)

"O Lady of Love, of old so debonair,
List to our lauds, for we would sing thy praise
In descant sweet as of the earlier days."

"The days are late; I weary of praise and prayer."

"Yet are we young, dear lady; is youth not fair
As when thine advent filled the woods and ways
With music of love-laughter and love-lays?"

"Your lays are dirges, and your love despair.
For lo! my god-gift of fresh joy, whereby
Honour was mine, for all men's hearts were fain,
Has turned, alas! through time's slow wizardry
And ill device, to poison and bitter bane,
That yet seem mine, O horror! and I, and I,
I that was Lady of Love am Lady of Pain."

PYGMALION.

(Suggested by Mr. Burne Jones' Picture.)

LIFE, life and love — Sculptor, thy prayer is heard!
See, of her gentle ruth and bountihead,
The Lady of Love herself hath deigned to shed
The light of life on that white form, and stirred
Soul and sweet sense within, till at thy word,
Thy look, thy touch, the love-flush mantles red,
Glorying.

But hark! what voice was that that said,
"Life, life and love! — ay, but with death for third; —
O fool, to change thy chisel's work, divine
And changeless, for a glamour-gift of breath
Pent in a bubble, a bubble of milk and wine,
And honey'd poison; — O fool, thus choosing death
When the eternity of art was thine!"

"Life, life and love — O fool!" the echo saith.

SILENCE AND THE VOICES OF MEN.

"*Le silence éternel de ces espaces infinis m'effraie.*"

PASCAL.

WHAT was there in that silence thus to scare
Thy eagle spirit, Pascal, strong to scale
The mount of God, to heights within the vail,
Even on the worn wings of its own despair?

I rather — if a moment I may dare
Place thought of mine, all light and bubble-frail,
By thought of thine — I rather faint and fail
Beneath the load that whoso lives must bear,
When listening to man's Babel voices rise,
Or far or near, from the abyss of time,
When every age, and race, and creed, and clime,
Is many-mouthed and voluble, and cries
Discord and doubt for ever — with the roar
As of a starless sea that has no shore.

THE FACE OF MY MISTRESS — WHICH LEONARDO DA VINCI SHALL DRAW FOR ME.

In looking at her face — which is not fair
To casual eyes as it is fair in mine —
I ponder oft what painter-hand divine
Had surest caught the soul of beauty there;
And for this task, in wayward fancy, dare
Evoke some sturdy truth-teller — Holbein
Or Dürer — or anon some Florentine
Of grace more delicate and dainty-rare.

But most to thee, great master, most to thee,
O Leonardo, have I turned, whose gaze
Through swirl of change, and time's slow gathering haze,
Pierced radiant — and who thus didst strangely see
The large-souled lady of our later days: —
Master, the face I love, draw it for me.

I.

THE OLD SYMBOL.

A WORLD of down, gray-green to the gray sky;
An ashy waste of waters at my feet;
Low overhead the rent rack flying fleet
Seaward; and in the air a pitiless cry
Of ravening waves and wild winds hurrying by,
Gust upon gust, harsh, strident, keen as sleet; —
And here upon the cliff, where most they beat
Those desolate winds, flashes a butterfly,
Vermilion, white, and velvet black, that clings
A moment to the turf, then strives amain,
Back and yet back, with passionate fluttering wings,
To stem the blast — but strives all all in vain,
For the relentless wind from the old shore
Hounds it, — and it is lost for evermore.

II.

THE NEW OUTLOOK.

AND still the wind goes wailing its hoarse dirge —
Thy dirge, O soul! — Here on this cliff in thought
I see thee too, a struggling creature caught
In tempest-talons, driven as by the scourge
Of furies forth beyond the sheer last verge
Of all thy past of life, a thing distraught,
Dishevel'd, helpless, — naught before thee, naught,
But mist of the coming night and cruel surge;
And there behind, fast fading from our view,
The heart's old haunts that nothing can renew —
The little hollow in the hills where lie
The red-roofed huddled homesteads, — close above
The church just visible against the sky, —
And, — O my God! — the graves of those I love.

III.

ITS DESOLATE CRY.

AND there be those who say, "The old is past,
The new shall make amends; beyond this roar
And trouble of great waters a new shore
Shall smile upon us at the weary last."
Another shore! The burden of the blast,
The waves' refrain, is "Never, never more."
If the old fail us, if the old Christ-lore
Be but the bubble of an hour, upcast
By groping blind earth forces — then, ah then,
In the lone dim deep of eternity
Is there no home for the lost souls of men;
And standing here, on this last cliff, I cry
To the Lord God, in a great agony,
"Help, help, we perish, show thyself again!"

THE LAST METAMORPHOSIS OF MEPHISTOPHELES.

CANDID he is, and courteous therewithal,
Nor, as he once was wont, in the far prime,
Flashes his scorn to heaven; nor as the mime
Of after-days, with antic bestial,
Convenes the ape in man to carnival;
Nor as the cynic of a later time
Jeers, that his laughter, like a jangled chime,
Rings through the abyss of our eternal fall.

But now, in courtliest tones of cultured grace,
He glories in the growth of good, his glance
Beaming benignant as he bids us trace
Good everywhere — till, as mere notes that dance
Athwart the sunbeams, all things evil and base
Glint golden in his genial tolerance.

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE.

"Which is the Second Death."

THERE was a glory in his face, a flame
Of victor passion dancing in his eyes,
And on his lips lingered the melodies
Had roused the dreamy dead till glad acclaim
Rang through the halls of hell, and half in shame
At his own ruth, the King said, "Death denies
No boon, sweet singer, to the song that flies
Skyward in Death's despite;" — 'twas thus he came
To the dread portal, thus I saw him pass
And stand without; and then the clear cold light
Of the morn smote him, and he turned, alas,
He turned a blank face back, and from his sight,
Almost his grasp, she faded. — The great door
Rolled back reverberant for evermore.

THE STILL VOICE.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord."

METHOUGHT all kindlier vails were then withdrawn,
So that I saw this earth on which we dwell
Naked and shameless; — and it seemed a hell
On whose wild horror never hope would dawn.

For men in most part were but as the spawn
Of evil; — ay, I saw them, fierce and fell,
Mumbling dry bones of life; I saw them sell
Honour itself, and place their souls in pawn
To Lust and Folly; and I saw the strong
Pashing the weak with heavy hoofs of wrong,
And through the ages Right a slave to Might.

So then I cried, "How long, O Lord, how long?"

And a Still Voice made answer from the height,
"Child, all these things are ever in My sight."

ON A PHILISTINE THEME.

I.

MY LITTLE BOY'S FACE. (AGED 4.)

O LITTLE face, little loved tender face,
Set like a saint's, in curls for aureole,
Little loved face, in which the clear child-soul
Is mirrored with a changeful, perfect grace;
Where sudden ripples of light laughter chase
In dimples round the dainty mouth; where roll
Cloud-shadows of great questionings, and dole
For human ills half realised; — where race
In gloom and gleam, and hurry of shade and shine,
Grey mists of sorrow, and blue deeps of joy,
Thoughts of a folly that is half divine,
And bold imaginings, and fancies coy,
And reasonings dreamlike; — O, my boy, my boy,
Fair, fair for ever, be that face of thine!

ON A PHILISTINE THEME.

II.

LIFE.

O LITTLE face, how soon the years, alas!
Shall score stern lines upon that pure, smooth brow,
And round the eyes and vermeil mouth, where now
No harshness dwells, but thought and feeling pass
As subtle-smooth as light winds over grass —
Ay, score stern lines, marking the when and how
Of all life's storms: I hear their sway and sough
Coming; they gloom upon us; from the mass
And menace of the clouds break fire, and rain,
And thunder; then they sob themselves to sleep.
But, ah! the difference in the Summer plain,
The shatter'd woods, the sodden meadows deep,
And blasted promise of the golden grain; —
And at the change I cannot choose but weep.

III.

THE CLASSIC IDEAL.

MUST, then, thy beauty be so soon outworn —
A canker'd bud doomed to untimely death;
A hoarfrost landscape fading at a breath
Into unsightly drops; a pearl-rose morn
Heralding sleet and dank grey mists forlorn;
A goodly garment, as the Psalmist saith,
The moth shall fret until it perisheth?
For so some hold, deeming all beauty born
Of youth's enchantment of untroubled lines,
And tints unsmirched by Time's murk hand — ay, hold
That it must fade as each full feature pines
With age, and the flush cheek grows wan and cold,
The eye less bright, and chill with silver shines
The hair of bronze that had the sheen of gold.

IV.

THE GOTHIC IDEAL.

O SOUL, God's artist, art thou then the slave
Of that dull workman, Time? I tell thee nay,
He is thy studio-drudge, to mould youth's clay
At thy behest, and at thy will to grave
Manhood's stern marble. So thou guide the knave,
Then shall each touch and chisel-stroke display,
In lines perchance now broken in the sway
Of effort, now harmoniously suave,
The pure, high thought, which an inviolate will
Guards from the passion-strokes of pain and ill,
And slow corrosion of the mean and base;
And to life's close, not only in the ken
Of the great Master-Critic, but of men,
Beauty shall sit enthroned upon that face.

The Bibelot

"The Land of Memory knows no Time."

FROM *the book entitled* Roses of Paestum *we are minded to garner once again, our present selection being the essay* Vision and Memory. *Throughout this pearl-grey aquatint in prose we wander for a brief space*

> *"In that lost land, in that soft clime,*
> *In the crimson evening weather,—"*

which, as all men know, is the hidden country of the Heart's Desire.

Vision and Memory! "Beyond the fields of sleep and other years" what sights, what voices forever stilled on earth come back to us! Are not these imponderable things the sum total of all verse not hopelessly didactic? And is it not true that "we can see or receive, in people or things, only one's own part of them: the vision rising in our own eyes, the passion rising in our own hearts?"

One should not force this note of interpretation too far. It is believable that to the mind of Whistler, the evanescent little essay by Mr. McCurdy would have seemed

filled with sound and fury signifying nought. Fortunately we are not compelled to accept such superb disdain of Literature when it applies itself to Art. It is enough that in these "thumbnails" we can enjoy their silverpoint effect, leading to the gorgeous canvasses of Maurice Hewlett: delicate preludes, or so they seem, to such psychological studies of cities of old time as we find in Mr. Arthur Symons' latest volume.

Vision and Memory *has all the subtle suggestion of poetry contained in this stanza out of Swinburne's* Before Sunset:

> *"In the lower lands of day*
> *On the hither side of night,*
> *There is nothing that will stay,*
> *There are all things soft to sight;*
> *Lighted shade and shadowy light*
> *In the wayside and the way,*
> *Hours the sun has spared to smite,*
> *Flowers the rain has left to play."*

FOR DECEMBER:

THE FISHER OF MEN
BY FIONA MACLEOD.

THE SWEET MIRACLE
BY EÇA DE QUIEROZ.

Vision and Memory

By

Edward McCurdy.

This flower that smells of honey and the sea,
White laurustine, seems in my hand to be
A white star made of memory long ago
Lit in the heaven of dear times dead to me.

A star out of the skies love used to know
Here held in hand, a stray left yet to show
What flowers my heart was full of in the days
That are long since gone down dead memory's flow.

Dead memory that revives on doubtful ways,
Half hearkening what the buried season says
Out of the world of the unapparent dead
Where the lost Aprils are, and the lost Mays.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

I.

In a wild glen in Devon the water leaps in riot down the crags and swirls with deep murmur over the pools. The thickets of gnarled oak and beech and ash start from the water's brim, and bending shadow it, and then wind steeply up the hillsides. The verdure is the deep full green of late summer scarred by the crimson clusters of the ash berries. On the moor above are long belts of bracken and the purple glory of heather.

The wind stirs gently in the glen, swaying with soft undulation the ferns and grasses that cluster in rock-crevices.

The soft temperate air breathes a solitude and supreme content. Only the music of the moving water breaks the stillness with its eternal note of sadness. The fascination of its melody lures from the perfect pleasure of the present to memories. Memories called from the past by some unlooked-for turn of the wheel of remembrance; memories of other scenes in other lands; of hillsides thick with olives gleaming

silver to the sun, or shrinking, scorched by its embrace; of mossy undergrowth where the air is odorous with violets; of groves of palm and cypress; of plains of miles on miles of sun-steeped vineyards and all the rich-hued pageantry of the South. And in the scene of sylvan English loveliness the wonder of the beauty of Italy seems to take a unity and meaning the more vivid by the sense of contrast. For memory sleeps but lightly, and the touch alike of pleasure and of sorrow is quick to awaken, and the light sleeper rises and hurries away, her eyes mist-wreathed with the visions of sleep, a pilgrim to the present, "wandering between two worlds," and bound for a goal of far endeavour.

What is this restlessness which thus draws to the South the fantasies of memory or of dream?

Heine has given it perfect expression in his lyric of the pine and the palm — the pine standing lonely on a northern height, and sighing for the warm splendour of the palm-clad South, and the palm parched beneath a southern sky dreaming of the gentler coolness of the North.

It is the more definite expression of the sense of world strangeness: the conjecture of something other than the immediate which should more satisfy the sensibilities; and in northern art and song this feeling has found expression in praise of Italy and the rich-hued glory of the South.

Praise of a visioned Italy,—an *eidolon* of thought vague as fantasy, forth-fashioned of the desire of the spirit,—seen only in dream—its ramparts as though set in sheer space, and girt by the mist of the unattainable,—the land long sought of the wanderer, to whose repeated questioning the answer was alone:

"Dort wo du nicht bist—dort ist das Glück;" but for whom the vision existed so long as his quest was unfaltering.

Praise of an Italy real and remembered—seen in dream, but there fettered by memory. It will then lose something of the infinite possibilities of the conjectural, but will gain in vividness and dearness of recollection, for the memory of happiness will touch the chords of the soul more tenderly than they can ever be stirred by its expectation.

If essaying to realize the dream you visit visioned Italy, you make her the real, the remembered, then indubitably something is lost in the transformation. Some aspects of the vision must be modified under the pitiless logic of facts ; somewhere a cold insensibility will be shown to the peculiar charm of what has drawn you in reverence and awe ; something that should be Roman will be found Sardinian ; some monastery that you have imaged as a sleeping phantasm of a vanished world will be used as an artillery barrack ; some fresco — dim and faded in colour but changeless in purity and simplicity — will be found cleft asunder by the gaunt protruding arch of some pretentious modern tomb, or completely ruined alike in colour and outline by ill-judged restoration. Nor is the disillusionment the less poignant although you may realize that this is inevitable in a land so rich in monuments as Italy, and that in truth there is manifest in the acts of the *municipio* of every city in Tuscany a loving reverence for the past, and an attempt to preserve its art treasures and the memory of lives of good endeavour.

The sense of contrast of the reality to your half-formed visions may be such that you are like to decide as Heine did when he wrote to Théophile Gautier, "And have you been to Spain, and can you still write about it?" that there are certain countries of the heart which are known better without seeing what masquerades as reality, which "sleep brings close and waking drives away."

True is this of some cities and lands which have for an age flashed as beacon-lights on the pathway of human progress, and then on a sudden the flame has grown ineffectual and quiescent, and the spent light has quivered and flickered away, and the embers have grown cold and been scattered, and only their memories abide; or if life still clings to the spot it is as the young phoenix — posthumous, — born amid the ashes of life already departed, seeming as it were a stranger trespassing on and violating the sanctity of a tomb.

Tunis may hold the dust of Carthage in pledge, but it would be hard to part it from the sand of the desert.

Persepolis too, it is better not to visit. I have never been there and am not in the

least likely to go, and my entry into the capital will always remain an entirely poetic rhapsody —

> "It is a glorious thing to be a king
> And ride in triumph to Persepolis,"

and Marlowe's mighty line governs the ceremony. I enter riding in triumph. I am for the nonce a king. It is inconceivable that any actual visit would have other result than to blur this vision and shatter the fabric of the glory of Tamerlane.

But I cannot feel that it is better not to visit Spain in order to leave dreams intact, and even the most elegiac of those who travel there are neither tongue-tied by the sense of contrast nor yet is their utterance a lament that the past has been swept away. Rather would it seem that the hand of Time has touched the mediaeval glory of Granada and Castile very gently and reverently, mellowing it in radiance and sustaining it in sleep. And assuredly it is without question better to visit Italy and get visions modified as may be, for Italy of to-day is more beautiful than all dreams of it, and it will be the source of new visions manifold arising on the ashes of the old.

II.

Yet disillusionments there will be. Perhaps the entry into Rome will be one. I forget what my chosen form of entry used to be, but I am sure it was not by train. Now, however, having had experience of that method of entry I can imagine no other, and if I speculate at all about the matter it is as to whether it will be the *diretto* or the *direttissimo* next time or whether I shall ever take a seat in the *train de luxe*. In the day of stage coaches at the end of a long drive you came suddenly to a turn in the road where the eternal city was spread out before you, pasture to your gaze, and the driver at the psychological moment cracked his whip and remarked "Ecco Roma!" Now the railway station and the painful newness of the Via Venti Settembre hardly offer the same facilities for poetic impressions. Nor will the sense of incongruity end here. The evidence of two civilisations in the Colosseum inspired Gibbon to write the "Decline and Fall," as it had previously been witness of the resolve of Villani that he would put on record the history of his native city. Per-

haps you have indulged the fancy that the same spectacle may awaken in you some comparatively noteworthy thoughts or resolutions, and visiting it by moonlight for the heightening of picturesque effect you have found yourself playing involuntary hide and seek with a multitude of other tourists whose existence you would fain forget, and by day you have been an unwilling listener to peripatetic lecturers. You abstract yourself from these adventitious aids: the immensity, the magnificence is and must be awe-impelling as long as the stones remain, but the girdle of beauty, the wreathings of fern and grasses, with which each recurring spring would fain pay its tribute to the enduring grandeur of the fabric, all are torn ruthlessly away by its conservators, and the arena is freshly sanded, smooth to tread upon, and the result is rather archaeological than picturesque.

The same is in a measure true of all the relics of ancient Rome. They seem huge open-air museums, impressive alike by their immensity and antiquity, but surpassed in the haunting suggestiveness of beauty by an ivy-mantled English belfry tower.

Shelley in the preface to "Prometheus Unbound" states that: "The poem was chiefly written upon the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, among the flowery glades and thickets of odoriferous blossoming trees, which are extended in ever-winding labyrinths upon its immense platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the air."

Glades and thickets are there no longer. No glint of colour in the arches. Their dull red is arid and bare as the sand beneath them. There is nothing to abstract the attention from the crumbling masonry or to hinder the realization of the fact that these were once baths and are dust baths still.

Nature is the most fitting guardian of the monuments which a vanished race have entrusted to her keeping, and conservation such as this is in very deed a defilement.

Rome has disillusionments, and yet Rome is assuredly of all museums the most fascinating.

The eternal city — time's enigma in its periodic newness of life. The eternal cities — city built upon city — Rome of the Caesars, Rome of the Papacy, Rome in her tireless activity the capital of Italy. Coming to

Rome you are not a stranger, you have followed the path immemorial and inevitable, you have come to your heritage, for it is a part of the destiny of things, of your destiny and hers, that you should come and that she should teach. You have come even as your fathers have come, as all nations have come, captives for a witness of her triumph, conquering Goths to be conquered by her unarmed strength, Emperors and Kings to do obeisance to Christ's Vicar, pilgrims from far lands — barefooted and travel-stained — to offer prayers before some shrine that they might win pardon for sin, lovers of art to gaze upon her treasuries and win the thoughts that lie prisoned in her marbles. And long as is the role of her visitants the eternal city has been justified of them and they have learnt in the measure of their seeking, if they have sought humbly and waited: the dried rod blossomed in token that Tannhäuser might be saved, but he had stayed not within the gates and knew it not.

So for centuries the human tide changeless and ever changing as the sea has surged within her gates, bringing to her its needs,

its doubts and aspirations, — to learn of her fortitude to bear, of her energy to create, of her faith to suffer and to hope. Drifting on the tide, coming to your heritage, you wander amid her streets, and piece by piece, and stone by stone you make her memories your own, and unravel and remember and recreate her history and yours; and by the sorcery of dreams, temples and palaces are from the past recaptured, and "cloud-capt" the structures of Imperial Rome float before the eye in pristine grandeur.

Then a vision no less wonderful, — the mighty dome and gleaming cross of S. Peter's dwarfing the seven hills, the mass of lesser domes and campaniles innumerable, and all around treading on the dust of Caesars a city joyous with life, a life bizarre and cosmopolitan, revelling in the sunshine of the Roman winter, streaming through art galleries, dusting sacristies with dainty dresses in the search for pictures, marching with candles through the Catacombs, crowding into the Sistine to see the Pope at High Mass, shopping in the Corso and getting the news at Piale's in the morning, and after lunch making a Rotten Row of the Pincio,

—enjoying to the uttermost everything there is to be enjoyed, the concerts, the balls at the Quirinal, the opera, and the Carnival.

Wandering between these two visions you forgive much that is alien to expectation, you will forgive the conservators of classic Rome their archaeological trend, you will forgive the newness of new Rome, the huge monument to Victor Emmanuel, the unfinished Palace of Justice and the bare embankment of the Tiber, for the city still is *sacrosanct* of memory, inviolate alike to testify and to teach, and these changes are a token that the measure of her years is as yet unspanned.

III.

Whatever the vision of Venice which imagination has bodied forth, the reality cannot fail of picturesqueness, and if the city be entered at dusk, the first impression is likely to surpass all conjecture. After the long railway journey the contrast is fascinating. To step into a gondola and glide through narrow waterways under low bridges whereof the lamps are reflected as

stars in the still depth, hearing the slow swirl of the water round the keel, and the murmur of the ripples receding from the oar faint as retreating footsteps. To listen to the boatman's melancholy, deep-throated cry in passing canals on either hand that thread their way amid mouldering palaces dim and mysterious in the dusk. Then to emerge suddenly in the grand canal, to become one among other gondolas, gliding on the still water over the quivering shadows of churches and palaces, and on to the Lion and minarets of S. Mark and the brilliant gleam of the Piazza. This is surely the closest substitute to a visit to fairyland which can fall to the lot of ordinary mortals.

Morning brings reflection. Some of the palaces are dingy in decay, and like stage scenery lose their impressiveness in the light of day. But nothing can efface the memory of the wonder and delight of the first impression, and knowledge more minute adds to one detail the charm it takes from another. When you have settled down to see the city, and wander through churches to look at Bellinis and Tintorettos,

at times gliding through the silent waterways you pass by a coign of repose so perfect, where so little of change has marked the passage of centuries, that it seems that the touch of time has ceased utterly, and that you are wafted as by some stroke of an enchanter's wand back to when the Doges "used to wed the sea with rings," for the water is dappling the palace steps, and the sunlight is flushing the veins of the marble portico now as in the days of Dandolos.

The house of Othello has nothing save tradition to distinguish it from other palaces on the Riva, and yet the fact destroys no illusion.

Shakespeare's Italy is of local habitation too unsubstantial for the traveller to realize its landmarks, nor is it fashioned of the desire of dreams which recur to haunt in rivalry with the reality. For Shakespeare cannot be classed among the lovers of Italy in the sense in which some English and German poets have been. He adopted it as the accepted setting of tragedy and romance, a shadowy background, faintly outlined in the light of Bandello and Boccaccio, but merely a background, and with

nothing introduced in it which might divert the attention from the swift action of life. Local colour in plenty where he knew it — of London and Windsor — breaths of the English woodland whether the forest be Arden or a wood near Athens. But hardly any attempt to imagine local colour. Palaces and taverns were to him like enough all the world over, inasmuch as nobles and roysterers tarried in them, for they were the heart of the matter.

Whatever the story called for there were good sound models at Hampton or Eastcheap. A thick coat of local colour is apt to clog the wheel of action, and there is food enough for all moralizing in the common interests of life.

An attempt to generalize as to the conception of Italy held by the Elizabethan dramatists must rather have reference to the characters than the cities where the scenes are laid. We may say that they looked upon Italy as a land of quick moving human passion and infinite caprice of fate, but that Italy was hardly a geographical expression, that amongst the outlying parts of it must be numbered Sicily

and Illyria, and Vienna as being the scene of "Measure for Measure," and also surely, by the fitness of things, sea-girt Bohemia. In short as a local habitation it is "airy nothing," but the life of it is common to all humanity.

Hence if memories be wakeful at Amalfi — set amid the golden orange groves on the Bay of Salerno — they dwell rather upon the vicissitudes of the little republic — mistress of the sea before the mighty days of Pisa's power — than upon the sad fate of the duchess in Webster's great tragedy; and at Padua, so fascinating were Giotto's frescoes in the Arena Chapel, and those from the Apocalypse by Giusto Padovano in the Baptistery, that I confess I gave no thought to ascertain the possibility of seeing the house of Petruccio; and if Verona be the inevitable exception and call up thoughts of the Montagues and the Capulets, and if Juliet's balcony be a disappointment, probably the illusion so dispelled was derived as much from the Lyceum as from Shakespeare.

IV.

The words of the tablet on Casa Guidi in memory of Elizabeth Barrett Browning are true of other poets also. They have made golden links between Italy and England.

Impelled by the desire of dream, they have wandered from city to city, and the arts and memories there enthroned and the beauty of earth and sky have been as draughts from some Pierian spring of inspiration.

Milton's lines on Vallombrosa have led many a traveller there, and will do until the forests are all cut down. And the wanderings of "Childe Harold" — to how many have they been a pilgrimage? — a dear pilgrimage of thought? And when following on the paths of vision you are face to face, the stanzas have a trick of recurring, for there is that about them that will endure to meet the reality, and their stately chiselled beauty becomes the more apparent.

Rich in memories of Byron, of Shelley, and of the Brownings, is the whole expanse of Italy, from Asolo to Naples, from Venice to Lerici, and it is in the valley of the Arno — river of poets — that their memories

cluster most thickly. By years of wandering they gained to know Italy in the infinite variety of her beauty. The details of this knowledge more familiar are revealed rather in letters than in song. Therein they would fain reveal the spirit.

Thus to wander is indeed to know Italy — a knowledge not to be won in Rome or Florence. There the past is side by side with the present. In the old-world cities of Umbria and Tuscany you are the sole intruder. All else is steeped in the sleep of centuries. Sentinels of a vanished past, silently they testify — for the stones speak if you read of their carving — testify of the ambitions and beliefs of the builders, of a national life, strong and self-reliant.

Cities of the mountain and cities of the river.

Cities of the mountain — perched on eyrie fastnesses amid the tumbling hills, established in Etruscan strength that dug deep into the living rock before ever the Roman legions came, and whereof the grip still holds — unchanged of aspect, save that above the walls rise domes and slender campaniles, and in the old temples of strange worship,

the Madonna reigns — and now the altar and the crucifix have put on age like a garment, and are in concord with the past.

Of the cities of the river, Pisa may serve as a type.

There is something of the lover's devotion to his mistress in the worship by the city of the river. The stateliest palaces were set by her side that they might gaze upon her. The span of the bridges seem as circling arms that would fain embrace. The lamps that deck her are as a gleaming carcanet of gems. She was girdled with gates to seaward. She watched the galleys go forth to battle, and welcomed the victors home. It was in her chapel to "Our Lady of the Thorn," that the sailors votive offerings to the Virgin were laid.

A little distance apart in a quiet grassy space by the city wall lies the frescoed cloister of the sacred field of death, and beside it are the chief monuments of Pisan art, — the baptistery, the cathedral, and the campanile bending graciously. A place of reverie, and a solitude.

The roads that lead to it are grass-grown, and it seems that the city has turned away

and clings rather to the lady of life, the river, to gaze upon her and listen to the music of her voice.

They have grown old together, the lover and the lady, — old, wrinkled and quiescent. There are no Pisan galleys now to take the sea. The still surface of the river is unruffled, and asleep in its silent depth lie the trembling images of palaces and mouldering towers. The city too is asleep, dreaming of the past, and the song of the river is the quiet music of memories. But when the storm rages in the Apennines and the streams sweep in torrent to the plain, the Arno rises hooded in her might, and in the dark swirl of the rushing river the wrinkled image is as a dream dissolved, and the city trembles and seems as though it would wake, and waking, die.

Pisa has many memories of deeds and thoughts that live: the site of the Tower of Famine, the lamp which Galileo watched swinging, the relief from which Niccola Pisano learnt something of the old Greek manner of carving, the convent of S. Anne, where was imprisoned Emilia Viviani — immortalised in "Epipsychidion."

One may wander through the pinewoods to Gombo, where the sea gave up the body of Shelley, or on a long spring morning, farther afield to Lucca, crossing the brow of Monte S. Giuliano which hides it from the Pisan, or following the winding valley round its base; and all along the path the meadows are paven with flowers, and their arrowy odours mingle in the fresh spring air, steeping the senses in an ecstasy of delight.

Of the beauty of these old-world cities, as of that of hillside and valley, vision is no forerunner. For vision wins not nature to her aid, and cannot tell her secrets. Her dream may dim the reality in its conjecture of the master-works of man the builder, of "cloud-capt towers and gorgeous palaces," but she cannot image the beauty seen in autumn and spring wanderings in the garden of Italy, the glory of the Umbrian sunset, the silver belt of Como winding among the beech-clad hills, the first pink flush of the peach-blossom in the Tuscan valleys. So whether it is that conjecture has hardly dwelt upon the lesser cities, or that the immobility of their life had made them seem a part of nature, the sight of the many towers of

Albenga or San Gemignano is a delight unmingled by the sense of contrast.

Art is the utterance of beauty, and in art has the beauty of Italy rendered to the Giver its tribute of wonder and praise. It is the utterance of things by the wayside, of things lowly and familiar and therefore chosen of beauty to be her ministrants. The stone from the quarry becomes a gargoyle in the church, or frets the sky in pinnacles.

Pigments from earth and sea are prepared and blent in the semblance of the Madonna — an altar-piece to which the eye turned restfully, — Mary Mother, august to intercede, divine and pitiful. Yet withal a girl tender with the grace of human loveliness, and the type Florentine or Lombard, for the fairest maiden in the village had sat to the painter, and it is her beauty which still lives in his picture, as type of the Maiden of Bethlehem, and the attendant saints were her family and friends, and they or rather their children's children are by the roadside or in the Piazza to-day, and the painter's art as here revealed has been "the touches of things common, till they rose to touch the spheres."

It is a well-known story how Cimabue saw Giotto on the hillside drawing sheep, and asked his father to let him take the boy to Florence and teach him to be a painter. Without under-estimating Giotto's indebtedness to Cimabue, let us not forget the early years when he drew sheep on the hillside. Giotto himself seems never to have forgotten them, and the memory is at the root of his naturalism. He continued all his life to draw sheep and sheep dogs, and shepherds whenever the subject of a fresco admitted of his doing so. In the Arena Chapel at Padua, there being forty-eight spaces in which to paint scenes from the lives of the Virgin and of Christ, he fills six spaces before painting the birth of the Virgin, and three of these are scenes in the desert introducing sheep and shepherds.

Of other painters learning not only in the studio but on the hillside and in the valley, we must know the footsteps before we can in a measure estimate or appraise.

Fra Angelico in his cloister at Fiesole or San Marco — who is said to have always prayed before taking up his brush — painted

men as angels, and his are the pale pure colours of the sky at dawn.

Perugino's pictures breathe the gracious silence of the sunset in the Umbrian hills, and there too, amid the vine and olive, are the sylph-like aspen poplars of his backgrounds.

This gracious silence Raphael knew, and added to it tenderness, and in Rome grew his later manner, — the mastery of form and luxuriance of beauty of "the School of Athens" and "Attila."

So to wander over valley and hillside, high in the Apennines on Falterona's ridge, or following the pathways of her waters down to the pine-fringed shores, to Pisa and Ravenna, — so to wander is to learn something of the footsteps of Italy's greatest sons, wanderers alike in vision and in life.

V.

Vision and memory — they are the two books of all our wanderings. The one is a winged flight of imaginings, the other a treading in the pathway of experience. And in the pathway are set stones of stumbling, while in the winged flight there are

no unforeseen discomfitures, and yet after all our visioned wanderings we come back no wiser than we went; we have seen what we took with us to see, neither more nor less, without let or hindrance. The book of memory is rather a record of changing purposes and changed impressions, and a recognition of the measure of our dependence upon things as mundane as hotels, and as variable as weather. And indeed of the things which are written under this latter rubric there is often a wide discrepancy between the two books, for in visioned wanderings it never rains at inconvenient seasons, and the record of memory witnesses that even in Italy the climate is uncertain, and that our purposes vary with it. At one time we have put about the helm and run before the storm; at another seeing what we went out to see, we have nevertheless not seen it, for we have seen only a rain-washed travesty of that which is itself only in sunlight.

It dies hard — but of many deaths at last dies the belief that the sky is always blue. Venice and Capri were the only places in Italy whereof in the book of memory it

was written that there was always halcyon weather. And alas for Venice recently revisited! I am almost minded to go no more to Capri.

And yet who would wish, having seen it, that the sky of Italy should be always blue? Bewitching in its very uncertainties, in spring at its loveliest, it is as changeful of expression as ever a face may be. Overcast, doubting, pouting, and then breaking into smiles sweet as fugitive, and to the chasing away of the smiles follows the radiance of calm. Such is April — sunshine, shower, gloom and beauty all commingled, like an English April, laughing and weeping, only in contrast more abrupt, more southern, more passionate.

It is this Italy of which Tennyson sang in "The Daisy," perhaps the most realistic of all descriptions of Italian travel.

All the way across the plain of Lombardy it was raining, — and he chronicles the fact unflinchingly:

> "Rain at Reggio, rain at Parma;
> At Lodi, rain, Piacenza, rain."

There is something about the lines which seems to impart a vague comfort in the

experience of similar weather elsewhere in Italy.

Of course it rains, and of course there are disappointments and discomforts in travel, and experience is a consciousness of things trivial.

Sunshine and shower, — and the abiding memory is not of the shower :

> " O love, what hours were thine and mine,
> In lands of palm and southern pine."

Ruit hora — hours of the palm and pine — yes ! and hours of the myrtle as well. And passing leave us a little older, a little wiser perhaps, probably a little sadder, — and the richer in the infinite treasure of what is written in a few pages of the book of memory. *Ruit hora* — and yet the writing is so fresh that it is hard even to believe that it was written yesterday.

Memory is a regret, — and as such is something dearer, and more intimate than vistas of the unknown :

> " O love, we too shall go no longer
> To lands of summer across the sea."

Vision and memory — two names serve as types of the variance of their gifts.

Rossetti, in spirit a mediaeval Italian, a contemporary almost in art of Fra Filippo, in poetry of Guido Cavalcanti, and as such a dweller all his life in the Italy of vision, although he never set foot within the gates of her present-day reality.

Browning, knowing Italy by years of wandering — her mountains and valleys, her churches and art treasuries — and yet no Italian at all, but only a lover — a lover of beauty drawn in wonder to the South as a pilgrim to the East might journey — an Englishman loving Italy. See how he loved her:

> "Italy, my Italy!
> Queen Mary's saying serves for me —
> (When fortune's malice
> Lost her Calais)
> Open my heart and you will see
> Graved inside of it, 'Italy.'
> Such lovers old are I and she,
> So it always was, so shall ever be."

The Bibelot

THE two stories[1] *here brought into loving contrast are of essential spiritual harmony and exist as survivals in modern literature of a trad tion which has never wholly absented itself from the human heart. "Gleams and echoes" of this mystical presence "linger on the Roman roadside by the Domine Quo Vadis, on the hall of the Round Table at Winchester, on the clearing in the woodland where the Merciful Knight drew rein before the crucifix; and again and yet again it has returned, a voice and a vision, to such as at any time believed they saw and heard it."*[2]

Among the writings of Fiona Macleod The Fisher of Men *belongs to a small group comprising* The Wayfarer, The Last Supper, *and a few others of similar* genre. *In her Prologue to the volume in which these "legendary moralities" appear, she*

1 *See* The Washer of the Ford: And other Legendary Moralities. (*Edinburgh, [n. d.] 1896*). The Sweet Miracle by Eça de Querioz. *Done into English by Edgar Prestage. London, 1904. Sq. 16mo. Paper bds. Pp. 38.*

2 *See Introduction to* The Sayings of the Lord Jesus Christ by J. W. Mackail. (*Portland, 1905*).

has said: "I like to think that these spiritual chronicles, might as well, in substance, have been told a thousand years ago or be written a thousand years hence. That Fisher still haunts the invisible shadowy stream of human tears; those mystic Spinners still ply their triple shuttles, and the fair Weaver of Hope now as of yore and for ever sends his rainbows adrift across the hearts and through the minds of men." If not the most beautiful of the three named, 'The Fisher,' is at least in very perfect keeping with the prose poem which Mr. Prestage has translated into well-nigh flawless English.

To such as at any time believed they saw and heard it — *but unto none other! This is so exquisitely made manifest in* The Sweet Miracle *that one could easily come to accept it as a revealed truth. Without trace of mysticism the final words of this all too brief story are charged with a pathos, an echo of the Divine love of little children, which is capable of moving the soul as nothing else could move it.*

FOR JANUARY:

ARIADNE IN MANTUA:
A ROMANCE IN FIVE ACTS
BY VERNON LEE.

THE FISHER OF MEN
By
FIONA MACLEOD.

Light of the uttermost lands shall He be:
Raise up the dead, tread the labouring sea;

Fisher of men shall He be ere He dies.

NORA CHESSON.

"But now I have grown nothing, being all,
And the whole world weighs down upon my heart."
(Fergus and the Druid.)

WHEN old Sheen nic Lèoid came back to the croft, after she had been to the burn at the edge of the green airidh, where she had washed the *claar* that was for the potatoes at the peeling, she sat down before the peats.

She was white with years. The mountain wind was chill, too, for all that the sun had shone throughout the midsummer day. It was well to sit before the peat-fire.

The croft was on the slope of a mountain and had the south upon it. North, south, east, and west, other great slopes reached upward like hollow green waves frozen into silence by the very wind that curved them so, and freaked their crests into peaks and jagged pinnacles. Stillness was in that place for ever and ever. What though the Gorromalt Water foamed down Ben Nair, where the croft was, and made a hoarse voice for aye surrendering sound to silence? What though at times the stones fell from the ridges of Ben Chaisteal and Maolmòr,

and clattered down the barren declivities till they were slung in the tangled meshes of whin and juniper? What though on stormy dawns the eagle screamed as he fought against the wind that graved a thin line upon the aged front of Ben Mulad, where his eyrie was: or that the kestrel cried above the rabbit-burrows in the strath: or that the hill-fox barked, or that the curlew wailed, or that the scattered sheep made an endless mournful crying? What were these but the ministers of silence?

There was no blue smoke in the strath except from the one turf cot. In the hidden valley beyond Ben Nair there was a hamlet, and nigh upon three-score folk lived there; but that was over three miles away. Sheen Macleod was alone in that solitary place, save for her son Alasdair Mòr Og. "Young Alasdair" he was still, though the grey feet of fifty years had marked his hair. Alasdair Og he was while Alasdair Ruadh mac Chalum mhic Lèoid, that was his father, lived. But when Alasdair Ruadh changed, and Sheen was left a mourning woman, he that was their son was Alasdair Og still.

She had sore weariness that day. For all

that, it was not the weight of the burden that made her go in and out of the afternoon sun, and sit by the red glow of the peats, brooding deep.

When, nigh upon an hour later, Alasdair came up the slope, and led the kye to the byre, she did not hear him: nor had she sight of him, when his shadow flickered in before him and lay along the floor.

"Poor old woman," he said to himself, bending his head because of the big height that was his, and he there so heavy and strong, and tender, too, for all the tangled black beard and the wild hill-eyes that looked out under bristling grey-black eyebrows.

"Poor old woman, and she with the tired heart that she has. Aye, aye, for sure the weeks lap up her shadow, as the sayin' is. She will be thinking of him that is gone. Aye, or maybe the old thoughts of her are goin' back on their own steps, down this glen an' over that hill an' away beyont that strath, an' this corrie an' that moor. Well, well, it is a good love, that of the mother. Sure a bitter pain it will be to me when there's no old grey hair there to stroke. It's quiet here, terrible quiet, God knows, to

Himself be the blessin' for this an' for that; but when she has the white sleep at last, then it'll be a sore day for me, an' one that I will not be able to bear to hear the sheep callin', callin', callin' through the rain on the hills here, and Gorromalt Water an' no other voice to be with me on that day of the days."

She heard a faint sigh, and stirred a moment, but did not look round.

"Muim'-à-ghraidh, is it tired you are, an' this so fine a time, too?"

With a quick gesture, the old woman glanced at him.

"Ah' child, is that you indeed? Well, I am glad of that, for I have the trouble again."

"What trouble, Muim' ghaolaiche?"

But the old woman did not answer. Wearily she turned her face to the peat-glow again.

Alasdair seated himself on the big wooden chair to her right. For a time he stayed silent thus, staring into the red heart of the peats. What was the gloom upon the old heart that he loved? What trouble was it?

At last he rose and put meal and water into the iron pot, and stirred the porridge

while it seethed and sputtered. Then he poured boiling water upon the tea in the brown jenny, and put the new bread and the sweet-milk scones on the rude deal board that was the table.

"Come, dear tired old heart," he said, "and let us give thanks to the Being."

"Blessings and thanks," she said, and turned round.

Alasdair poured out the porridge, and watched the steam rise. Then he sat down, with a knife in one hand and the brown-white loaf in the other.

"Oh God," he said, in the low voice he had in the kirk when the Bread and Wine were given — "Oh God, be giving us now thy blessing, and have the thanks. And give us peace."

Peace there was in the sorrowful old eyes of the mother. The two ate in silence. The big clock that was by the bed *tick-tacked, tick-tacked.* A faint sputtering came out of a peat that had bog-gas in it. Shadows moved in the silence, and met and whispered and moved into deep, warm darkness. There was peace.

There was still a red flush above the hills

in the west when the mother and son sat in the ingle again.

"What is it, mother-my-heart?" Alasdair asked at last, putting his great red hand upon the woman's knee.

She looked at him for a moment. When she spoke she turned away her gaze again.

"Foxes have holes, and the fowls of the air have their places of rest, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head."

"And what then, dear? Sure, it is the deep meaning you have in that grey old head that I'm loving so."

"Aye, lennav-aghray, there is meaning to my words. It is old I am, and the hour of my hours is near. I heard a voice outside the window last night. It is a voice I will not be hearing, no, not for seventy years. It was cradle-sweet, it was."

She paused, and there was silence for a time.

"Well, dear," she began again, wearily, and in a low, weak voice, "it is more tired and more tired I am every day now this last month. Two Sabbaths ago I woke, and there were bells in the air: and you are for knowing well, Alasdair, that no kirk-bells

ever rang in Strath-Nair. At edge o' dark on Friday, and by the same token the thirteenth day it was, I fell asleep, and dreamed the mools were on my breast, and that the roots of the white daisies were in the hollows where the eyes were that loved you, Alasdair, my son."

The man looked at her with troubled gaze. No words would come. Of what avail to speak when there is nothing to be said? God sends the gloom upon the cloud, and there is rain: God sends the gloom upon the hill, and there is mist: God sends the gloom upon the sun, and there is winter. It is God, too, sends the gloom upon the soul, and there is change. The swallow knows when to lift up her wing over against the shadow that creeps out of the north: the wild swan knows when the smell of snow is behind the sun: the salmon, lone in the brown pool among the hills, hears the deep sea, and his tongue pants for salt, and his fins quiver, and he knows that his time is come, and that the sea calls. The doe knows when the fawn hath not yet quaked in her belly: is not the violet more deep in the shadowy dewy eyes? The woman knows

when the babe hath not yet stirred a little hand: is not the wild-rose on her cheek more often seen, and are not the shy tears moist on quiet hands in the dusk? How, then, shall the soul not know when the change is nigh at last? Is it a less thing than a reed, which sees the yellow birch-gold adrift on the lake, and the gown of the heather grow russet when the purple has passed into the sky, and the white bog-down wave grey and tattered where the loneroid grows dark and pungent — which sees, and knows that the breath of the Death-Weaver at the Pole is fast faring along the frozen norland peaks. It is more than a reed, it is more than a wild doe on the hills, it is more than a swallow lifting her wing against the coming of the shadow, it is more than a swan drunken with the savour of the blue wine of the waves when the green Arctic lawns are white and still. It is more than these, which has the Son of God for brother, and is clothed with light. God doth not extinguish at the dark tomb what he hath litten in the dark womb.

Who shall say that the soul knows not when the bird is aweary of the nest, and the

nest is aweary of the wind? Who shall say that all portents are vain imaginings? A whirling straw upon the road is but a whirling straw: yet the wind is upon the cheek almost ere it is gone.

It was not for Alasdair Og, then, to put a word upon the saying of the woman that was his mother, and was age-white, and could see with the seeing of old wise eyes.

So all that was upon his lips was a sigh, and the poor prayer that is only a breath out of the heart.

"You will be telling me, grey sweetheart," he said lovingly, at last — "you will be telling me what was behind the word that you said: that about the foxes that have holes for the hiding, poor beasts, and the birdeens wi' their nests, though the Son o' Man hath not where to lay his head?"

"Aye, Alasdair, my son that I bore long syne an' that I'm leaving soon, I will be for telling you that thing, an' now too, for I am knowing what is in the dark this night o' the nights."

Old Sheen put her head back wearily on the chair, and let her hands lie, long and

white, palm-downward upon her knees. The peat-glow warmed the dull grey that lurked under her closed eyes and about her mouth, and in the furrowed cheeks. Alasdair moved nearer and took her right hand in his, where it lay like a tired sheep between two scarped rocks. Gently he smoothed her hand, and wondered why so frail and slight a creature as this small old wizened woman could have mothered a great swarthy man like himself — he a man now, with his two score and ten years, and yet but a boy there at the dear side of her.

"It was this way, Alasdair-mochree," she went on in her low thin voice — like a wind-worn leaf, the man that was her son thought. "It was this way. I went down to the burn to wash the *claar*, and when I was there I saw a wounded fawn in the bracken. The big sad eyes of it were like those of Maisie, poor lass, when she had the birthing that was her going-call. I went through the bracken, and down by the Gorromalt, and into the Glen of the Willows.

"And when I was there, and standing by the running water, I saw a man by the

stream-side. He was tall, but spare and weary: and the clothes upon him were poor and worn. He had sorrow. When he lifted his head at me, I saw the tears. Dark, wonderful, sweet eyes they were. His face was pale. It was not the face of a man of the hills. There was no red in it, and the eyes looked in upon themselves. He was a fair man, with the white hands that a woman has, a woman like the Bantighearna of Glenchaisteal over yonder. His voice, too, was a voice like that: in the softness, and the sweet, quiet sorrow, I am meaning.

"The word that I gave him was in the English: for I thought he was like a man out of *Sasunn*, or of the southlands somewhere. But he answered me in the Gaelic: sweet, good Gaelic like that of the Bioball over there, to Himself be the praise.

"'And it is the way down the Strath you are seeking,' I asked: 'and will you not be coming up to the house yonder, poor cot though it is, and have a sup of milk, and a rest if it's weary you are?'

"'You are having my thanks for that,' he said, 'and it is as though I had both the

good rest and the cool sweet drink. But I am following the flowing water here.'

"'Is it for the fishing?' I asked.

"'I am a Fisher,' he said, and the voice of him was low and sad.

"He had no hat on his head, and the light that streamed through a rowan-tree was in his long hair. He had the pity of the poor in his sorrowful grey eyes.

"'And will you not sleep with us?' I asked again: 'that is, if you have no place to go to, and are a stranger in this country, as I am thinking you are; for I have never had sight of you in the home-straths before.'

"'I am a stranger,' he said, 'and I have no home, and my father's house is a great way off.'

"'Do not tell me, poor man,' I said gently, for fear of the pain, 'do not tell me if you would fain not; but it is glad I will be if you will give me the name you have.'

"'My name is Mac-an-t'-Saoir,' he answered with the quiet deep gaze that was his. And with that he bowed his head, and went on his way, brooding deep.

"Well, it was with a heavy heart I turned, and went back through the bracken. A

heavy heart, for sure, and yet, oh peace too, cool dews of peace. And the fawn was there: healed, Alasdair, healed, and whinny-bleating for its doe, that stood on a rock wi' lifted hoof an' stared down the glen to where the Fisher was.

"When I was at the burnside, a woman came down the brae. She was fair to see, but the tears were upon her.

"'Oh,' she cried, 'have you seen a man going this way?'

"'Aye, for sure,' I answered, 'but what man would he be?'

"'He is called Mac-an-t'-Saoir.'

"'Well, there are many men that are called Son of the Carpenter. What will his own name be?'

"'Iosa,' she said.

"And when I looked at her, she was weaving the wavy branches of a thorn near by, and sobbing low, and it was like a wreath or crown that she made.

"'And who will you be, poor woman?' I asked.

"'Oh my Son, my Son,' she said, and put her apron over her head and went down into the Glen of the Willows, she

weeping sore, too, at that, poor woman.

"So now, Alasdair, my son, tell me what thought you have about this thing that I have told you. For I know well whom I met on the brae there, and who the Fisher was. And when I was at the peats here once more I sat down, and my mind sank into myself. And it is knowing the knowledge I am."

"Well, well, dear, it is sore tired you are. Have rest now. But sure there are many men called Macintyre."

"Aye, an' what Gael that you know will be for giving you his surname like that."

Alasdair had no word for that. He rose to put some more peats on the fire. When he had done this, he gave a cry.

The whiteness that was on the mother's hair was now in the face. There was no blood there, or in the drawn lips. The light in the old, dim eyes was like water after frost.

He took her hand in his. Clay-cold it was. He let it go, and it fell straight by the chair, stiff as the cromak he carried when he was with the sheep.

"Oh my God and my God," he whispered,

white with the awe, and the bitter cruel pain.

Then it was that he heard a knocking at the door.

"Who is there?" he cried hoarsely.

"Open, and let me in." It was a low, sweet voice but was that grey hour the time for a welcome?

"Go, but go in peace, whoever you are. There is death here."

"Open, and let me in."

At that, Alasdair, shaking like a reed in the wind, unclasped the latch. A tall fair man, ill-clad and weary, pale, too, and with dreaming eyes, came in.

"*Beannachd Dhe an Tigh*," he said, "God's blessing on this house, and on all here."

"The same upon yourself," Alasdair said, with the weary pain in his voice. "And who will you be? and forgive the asking."

"I am called Mac-an-t'-Saoir, and Iosa is the name I bear — Jesus, the Son of the Carpenter."

"It is a good name. And is it good you are seeking this night?"

"I am a Fisher."

"Well, that's here an' that's there. But

will you go to the Strath over the hill, and tell the good man that is there, the minister, Lachlan MacLachlan, that old Sheen nic Lèoid, wife of Alasdair Ruadh, is dead."

"I know that, Alasdair Og."

"And how will you be knowing that, and my name too, you that are called Macintyre?"

"I met the white soul of Sheen as it went down by the Glen of the Willows a brief while ago. She was singing a glad song, she was. She had green youth in her eyes. And a man was holding her by the hand. It was Alasdair Ruadh."

At that Alasdair fell on his knees. When he looked up there was no one there. Through the darkness outside the door, he saw a star shining white, and leaping like a pulse.

It was three days after that day of shadow that Sheen Macleod was put under the green turf.

On each night, Alasdair Og walked in the Glen of the Willows, and there he saw a man fishing, though ever afar off. Stooping he was, always, and like a shadow at times. But he was the man that was called

Iosa Mac-an-t'-Saoir — Jesus, the Son of the Carpenter.

And on the night of the earthing he saw the Fisher close by.

"Lord God," he said, with the hush on his voice, and deep awe in his wondering eyes: "Lord God!"

And the Man looked at him.

"Night and day, Alasdair MacAlasdair," he said, "night and day I fish in the waters of the world. And these waters are the waters of grief, and the waters of sorrow, and the waters of despair. And it is the souls of the living I fish for. And lo, I say this thing unto you, for you shall not see me again: *Go in peace*. Go in peace, good soul of a poor man, for thou hast seen the Fisher of Men."

The Sweet Miracle

By

Eça de Queiroz.

Et circuibat Jesus omnes civitates et castella, docens in synagogis eorum et praedicans evangelium regni et curans omnem languorem et omnem infirmitatem.

EVANGELIUM SECUNDUM MATTHACUM, CAPUT IX.

PREFATORY NOTE.

Eça de Queiroz (born 1846, died 1900) was undoubtedly Portugal's greatest prose-writer of the last half of the nineteenth century. He is known to us mainly by that splendid romance, Cousin Basil, but the Correspondence of Fradique Mendes reveals a versatility of talent in this humourist and critic of life which even the greatest novelists have lacked, and The City and the Mountains contains pages of landscape painting which are already classical. The prose-poem here translated shows that his journey through Palestine had penetrated the Master of Realism with the spirit of the East, and calls to mind another book of his, The Relic, which seems to echo the genius of Flaubert. Other short stories of Eça de Queiroz will follow, if the reception of the present one be favourable.

Edgar Prestage.

THE SWEET MIRACLE.

In those days Jesus had not yet departed from Galilee and the fair luminous margins of the Lake of Tiberias; but the news of his miracles had already penetrated as far as Enganim, a rich city of strong battlements set among vineyards and olive-groves in the Country of Issachar.

One afternoon there passed down the fresh valley a man of burning, dazzled eyes, who announced that a new Prophet, a handsome Rabbi, was traversing the plains and villages of Galilee, foretelling the coming of the Kingdom of God, and curing all human ills. And while he sat and rested beside the Fountain of the Orchards, he went on to tell how this Rabbi had healed the slave of a Roman Decurion of leprosy on the Magdala Road, merely by spreading over him the shadow of his hands; and how, another morning, he had crossed by boat to the Country of the Gerasenes where the balsam-harvest was commencing, and had raised to life the daughter of Jairus, a man of consideration and learning who expounded the Sacred Books in the Synagogue. And when the husbandmen and shepherds round

about, and the dark women with water-pots on their shoulders, inquired of him in their wonderment if this was in truth the Messias of Judah, and whether the sword of fire shone before him, and if the shadows of Gog and Magog, like the shadows of twin towers, walked on either side of him — the man, without even a draught of that thrice-cold water of which Joshua had drunk, took up his staff, shook his hair, and made his way pensively beneath the aqueduct, and straightway disappeared from sight in the mass of flowering almond trees. But a hope, delightful as the dew in the month when the grasshopper sings, refreshed these simple souls, and now, through all the Plain that stretches its verdure to Ascalon, the plough seemed easier to bury in the soil, and the stone of the winepress lighter to move; the children, even while they plucked bunches of anemones, watched, as they went, for a light to rise past the turn of the wall, or under the sycamore, while the aged from their stone seats at the city gate ran their fingers through the threads of their beards, and no longer unfolded the old sayings with such wise certainty as of yore.

Now there lived then in Enganim an old man, named Obed, of a priestly family of Samaria, who had offered sacrifices on the altars of Mount Ebal, and was possessed of well-nourished flocks and richly bearing vineyards, and a heart as full of pride as his cellar was full of wheat. But a dry burnt wind, that wind of desolation, which, at the Lord's command, blows from the savage lands of Assur, had slain the fattest beasts of his flocks, and, on the slopes where his vines twined round the elms and stretched themselves on the graceful frames, it had left nought round the bare trees and pillars save broken twigs, shrunken stalks, and leaves eaten by curly blight. And Obed squatted at the threshold of his gate with the end of his cloak over his face, fingered the dust, lamented his old age, and ruminated complaints against a cruel God.

Now as soon as he heard tell of the new Rabbi of Galilee, who fed the multitudes, scared demons, and repaired all misfortunes, Obed, who was a man of books, and had travelled in Phenicia, conceived in his mind that Jesus must be one of those soothsayers, well-known in Palestine, like Apollonius,

or Rabbi Ben-Dossa, or Simon the Subtle. These men, even when the nights are dark, hold converse with the stars, whose secrets to them are ever clear and simple; with a wand they drive the gadflies, born in the mud of Egypt, from the standing corn, and grasping in their fingers the shadows of trees, they draw them like kindly screens over the threshing-floors at the hour of rest. Of a surety Jesus of Galilee, a younger man with newer charms, would, in return for a liberal largess, bring the mortality among his flocks to an end, and make his vineyards green once more. Thereupon Obed commanded his servants to set forth and search through all Galilee for the new Rabbi, and bring him, with promises of money or goods, to Enganim, in the Country of Issachar.

His slaves tightened their leather belts and swung out by the road of the caravans that coasts the lake and stretches as far as Damascus. One afternoon, over against the West, red as a fully ripe pomegranate, they caught sight of the fine snows of Mount Hermon. Next, amid the freshness of a soft morning, the Lake of Tiberias shone before

them, transparent, cloaked in silence, more blue than the heavens, with its margins of flowery meadows, dense orchards, porphyry rocks, and white terraces amid the palm groves, under the flight of the doves. A fisherman, who was engaged in lazily untying his boat from a grassy point shaded by oleanders, listened with a smile to the slaves. The Rabbi of Nazareth? Oh! since the month of Ijar, the Rabbi with his disciples had descended to the sides whither the Jordan bears its waters. The slaves set out at a run along the margin of the stream until they came in front of the ford where it rests, stretching out in a great pool, and for a moment slumbers, motionless and green, beneath the tamarinds' shade. A man of the tribe of the Essenes, clothed from head to foot in white linen, was slowly gathering health-giving herbs by the water side with a white lambkin in his arms. The slaves humbly saluted him, for the people love those men of honest, pure hearts, as white as the vestures they wash morning by morning in the purified tanks. And did he know of the passing of the new Rabbi of Galilee who, like the Essenes, taught sweetness and

cured men and cattle? The Essene murmured that the Rabbi had crossed the Oasis of Engaddi, and had passed further beyond. But where "beyond?" With a bunch of purple flowers he had plucked, the Essene pointed to the country over Jordan, the plain of Moab. The slaves forded the river and sought Jesus in vain, toiling breathlessly up the rough tracks to the cliffs where the sinister Citadel of Makaur raises its head. At Jacob's Well they met a great caravan at rest that was carrying into Egypt myrrh, spices, and balm of Gilead, and the camel drivers, as they drew out the water in their leather buckets, told the slaves of Obed how in Gadara, at the new moon, a wonderful Rabbi, greater than David or Isaiah, had torn seven devils from the breast of a weaver-woman, and how at his voice a man, whose head had been cut off by the robber Barabbas, had risen from the tomb, and gone back to his garden. The slaves, still hopeful, straightway mounted in haste by the Pilgrim's Way to Gadara, that city of lofty towers, and further on still to the Springs of Amalha. But that very morning, followed by a crowd singing and waving branches of

mimosa, Jesus had embarked on the lake in a fishing smack, and made his way under sail towards Magdala. And the slaves of Obed, disheartened, passed the ford again by the Bridge of the Daughters of Jacob. One day, as they trod the country of Roman Judea, their sandals torn with the long ways, they crossed a sombre Pharisee, mounted on a mule, who was returning to Ephraim. With devout reverence they stopped the man of the Law. Had he met, perchance, this new Prophet of Galilee who, like a God walking the earth, sowed miracles as he went? The hooked face of the Pharisee darkened in every furrow, and his wrath resounded like a proud drum. "Oh! pagan slaves and blasphemers! Where have ye heard of prophets or miracles out of Jerusalem? Only Jehovah in His Temple is mighty. Ignorant men and impostors come out of Galilee!"

And as the slaves recoiled before his raised fist wrapped round with sacred couplets, the furious doctor leapt from his mule and with stones from the road pelted the slaves of Obed, howling Racca! Racca! and all the ritual curses. The slaves fled to Enganim,

and great was the sorrow of Obed because his flocks were dying and his vineyards were scorched, and all the time, radiant like the dawn behind the mountains, the fame of Jesus of Galilee, consoling and full of Divine promises, grew and increased.

At that time a Roman Centurion, named Publius Septimus, had command of the fort which dominates the valley of Cesarea as far as the city and the sea. A rough man and a veteran of Tiberius' campaign against the Parthians, Publius had grown rich with prizes and plunder during the revolt of Samaria. He owned mines in Attica, and enjoyed, as a supreme favour of the Gods, the friendship of Flaccus, the Imperial Legate in Syria. But a sorrow gnawed his boundless prosperity, even as a worm gnaws a very succulent fruit. His only daughter, dearer to him than life and fortune, was pining away with a slow subtle of malady which escaped even the wisdom of the doctors and magicians whom he sent to consult at Tyre and Sidon. White and sad like the moon in a cemetery, uncomplaining, with pallid smiles for her father, she grew weaker and more frail as she sat on the

high esplanade of the fort under an awning, and stretched her sad dark eyes with longing regret over the blue of the Tyrian Sea by which she had sailed from Italy in a rich galley. Now and then, at her side, a legionary between the battlements aimed an arrow carelessly aloft and pierced a great eagle as it flew with serene wing in the rutilant sky. The daughter of Septimus followed the bird for a moment as it turned over and over until it crashed dead on the rocks, then with a sigh, sadder and more pale, began once more to gaze at the sea. Now Septimus, having heard the merchants of Chorazim tell of this wonderful Rabbi whose power over the Spirits was such that he cured the dark troubles of the soul, despatched three decuria of soldiers with orders to search for him through Galilee and in all the cities of Decapolis as far as the coast and up to Ascalon. The soldiers put up their shields in the canvas bags, fixed boughs of the olive tree in their helmets, and hurriedly departed, their iron-shod sandals resounding on the basalt slabs of the Roman road which cuts the whole Tetrarchate of Herod from Cesarea

to the Lake. At night their arms shone out on the tops of the hills amid the waving flames of the torches they bore aloft. By day they invaded the homesteads, searched through the thickest apple orchards, and drove the points of their lances into the haystacks, and the frightened women, to appease them, hastened in with cakes of honey, new figs, and bowls full of wine, which they drank at one draught as they sat in the shade of the sycamores. In this way they traversed Lower Galilee — but of the Rabbi all they found was his bright track in the hearts of the people. Wearied with futile marching, and suspecting that the Jews were concealing their wonder-worker lest the Romans should avail themselves of his superior magic, they let loose a tumult of anger as they passed throught the pious subject-land. At the entrance to bridges they stopped the Pilgrims, shouting the name of the Rabbi, tearing the veils from the virgins' faces, and, at the hour when pitchers are filled at the cisterns, they invaded the narrow streets of towns, penetrated into the Synagogues and beat sacrilegiously with their sword hilts on the

Thebahs — the holy Arks of cedar which enclosed the Sacred Books. In the environs of Hebron they dragged the Hermits by the beard from their caves to draw from them the name of the desert or palm grove where the Rabbi was hid, and two Phœnician merchants who were coming from Joppa with a cargo of malobatrum, and who had never heard the name of Jesus, paid one hundred drachmas for this crime to each Decurion. And now the peasantry, and even the wild shepherds of Idumea who bring in the white beasts for the Temple, fled in terror to the mountains as soon as they saw the arms of the violent band glittering at some turn of the road; while from the edge of the terraces the old women shook the ends of their dishevelled hair like bags, and flung ill-luck at them, invoking the vengeance of Elias. In this tumult they wandered as far as Ascalon, but failed to find Jesus, and returning along the coast they buried their sandals in the burning sands. One morning near Cesarea, as they were marching in a valley, they caught sight of a dark green grove of laurels on a hill, among which the elegant bright portico of a

temple shown white in its retirement. An old man of long white beard, crowned with laurel leaves, clothed in a saffron tunic and holding a short three-stringed lyre, was gravely awaiting the rising of the sun on the marble steps. Down below, the soldiers waved a branch of olive and shouted to the priest. Did he know a new Prophet who had arisen in Galilee and who was so clever in miracles that he raised the dead to life, and changed water into wine? Quietly extending his arms, the serene old man cried out over the dewy verdure of the valley — "Ye Romans, believe ye that prophets appear working miracles in Galilee or Judea? How can a barbarian alter the order established by Zeus? Magicians and soothsayers are pedlars who murmur empty words to snatch an alms from simple folk. Without the permission of the Immortals, not a withered branch can fall from the tree, not a dry leaf be shaken. There are no prophets, no miracles. . . . The Delphic Apollo alone knoweth the secret of things!"

Slowly then, with heads cast down as after a defeat, the soldiers returned to the fortress of Cesarea, and great was the despair

of Septimus because his daughter was dying, and no complaint did she utter, but gazed as she lay there at the Tyrian Sea, and all the while the fame of Jesus, the healer of lingering maladies, grew ever fresher and more consoling, like the afternoon breeze that blows from Hermon and revives and lifts the drooping lilies in the gardens.

Now between Enganim and Cesarea, in a wretched hut sunk in the cleft of a hillock, there lived at this time a widow, the most miserable of all the women in Israel. Her only son, a little boy crippled in every part, had passed from the lean breasts at which she had suckled him to the rags of a rotting mattress, where he had lain starving and groaning now seven years. And her, too, sickness had shrivelled within her never-changed rags until she was darker and more contorted than an uprooted vine. And, over the twain, misery had grown thick as the mould over broken potsherds lost in a desert. Even the oil in their red clay lamp had long since dried up, and neither seed nor crust was left in the painted chest. In the summer, their goat had died for lack of pasture; next, the fig-tree in the garden ceased to

bear. So far were they from an inhabited place that no alms of bread or honey ever entered their door. Herbs plucked in the fissures of the rocks and cooked without salt were all that nourished those creatures of God in the Chosen Land where even birds of ill omen had enough and to spare!

One day a beggar entered the hut and shared his wallet with the sorrowing mother, and as he sat for a moment at the hearthstone and scratched the wounds in his legs, he told of the great hope of the afflicted, this Rabbi who had appeared in Galilee and of one loaf in a basket made seven, and how he loved all little children and dried all tears, and promised the poor a great and luminous kingdom of more abundance than the Court of Solomon. The woman listened with famished eyes. And this sweet Rabbi, this hope of the sorrowful, where was he to be found? The beggar sighed. Ah, this sweet Rabbi! How many had longed for him and been disappointed! His fame was going over all Judea like the sun that leaves not even a stretch of old wall without its blessed rays, yet only those fortunate

ones chosen of his will could gain a sight of his fair countenance.

Obed, the rich, had sent his slaves throughout all Galilee to search for Jesus and bring him with promises to Enganim: Septimus, the powerful, had despatched his soldiers as far as the sea coast to find Jesus and conduct him by his orders to Cesarea. As he wandered and begged his bread on many a road, he had met the slaves of Obed and then the legionaries of Septimus. And all had returned like beaten men, their sandals torn, without having discovered the wood or city, hovel or palace, where Jesus lay hid.

The evening was falling. The beggar took up his staff and descended by the hard track between the heather and the rocks, while the mother returned to her corner more cast down and desolate than before. And then in a murmur, weaker than the brush of a wing, her little son begged his mother to bring him this Rabbi who loved even the poorest little children and healed even the longest sicknesses. The mother clasped his tangled head and said:

"Oh, my son! How canst thou ask me

to leave thee and set out on the road in search of the Rabbi of Galilee? Obed is rich and hath slaves, and in vain they sought Jesus over hills, and through sandy plains from Chorazim to the Country of Moab. Septimus is mighty and hath soldiers, yet in vain they hunted for Jesus from Hebron to the sea! How canst thou ask me to leave thee? Jesus is afar off, and our grief abideth with us within these walls and imprisons us between them. And were I to meet with him, how should I persuade this longed-for Rabbi, for whom the rich and mighty sigh, to come down from city to city as far as this solitude in order to cure such a poor little impotent on such a ragged mattress!"

But the child, with two long tears on its thin little face, murmured: "Mother, Jesus loveth all the little ones. And I am still so small and have such a heavy sickness and should so like to be cured!" To which the mother sobbing: "child of mine how can I leave thee? The roads of Galilee are long, and the pity of men is short. So ragged, so limping, so sorrowful am I, that even the dogs would bark at me from the homestead doors. None would give ear to my mes-

sage, none would show me the dwelling-place of the sweet Rabbi. And, my child! perhaps Jesus is dead, for not even the rich or the mighty meet with him. Heaven sent him. Heaven hath taken him away. And with him the hopes of the sorrowful have died for ever." The child raised his trembling little hands from out of his dark rags and murmured: "Mother, I want to see Jesus."

And immediately, opening the door slowly and smiling, Jesus said to the Child: "I am here."

HERE ends THE BIBELOT Volume Eleven. Printed by Smith & Sale for Thomas B. Mosher and published by him at XLV Exchange Street Portland Maine. MDCCCCV.

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